Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT • NUMBER ONE • JULY 1989

How the PLO Was Legitimized

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

Gorbachev's Strategy, and Ours

Edward N. Luttwak

The Curious Case of Chemical Warfare
Michael Ledeen

Demystifying the French Revolution
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Public Opinion and the Jogger
Richard Brookhiser

Still Taking the Fifth
David Horowitz

A Major Israeli Novel
Alan Mintz

"Lamentation From the Future"
Norman Podhoretz & Critics

Books in Review: Donna Rifkind / Whittle Johnston / David Brock / Thomas Short / George Russell

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Letters from Readers

"Lamentation"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz is quite right in his "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future" [March]. There is a division within Israel that has spilled over into the Diaspora, affecting at least those of us who care deeply about Israel. But this has less to do with the political Left and the intellectuals (read "leftist intellectuals") whom Mr. Podhoretz excoriates than with two visions of Israel that have been in conflict since the 1930's. The struggle between the Revisionist disciples of Ze'ev Jabotinsky and the Zionist followers of Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion reemerged twenty years after Israel's independence and its end is not in sight.

One might have supposed that Israel's acceptance in 1948 of two political entities west of the Jordan River, one Jewish, the other Arab, would have ended the matter. Although then, as now, this decision was anathema to the Revisionists, Ben-Gurion had the votes and so it was that Israel came into being without laying claim to the Greater Israel coveted by the Revisionists. The matter would have ended there had it not been for King Hussein's folly in joining Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser in the Six-Day War of 1967 which resulted in Israel's occupying the West Bank. This gave new life to the Revisionists, at that time led by Menachem Begin and his Herut party. Soon thereafter the young members of Rabbi Moshe Levinger's Gush Emunim movement started building settlements on the West Bank, not in furtherance of Israel's security but rather to make a statement about the right of Jews to live anywhere in *Eretz Yisrael*. These settlements, mostly illegal, were later sanctioned when Mr. Begin came to power in 1977.

Mr. Podhoretz suggests that those who disagree with the Revisionists have less of a commitment to the permanence of Israel and are operating at least in part out of some snobbish impulse or out of resentment of the increased political power of the Sephardim and the Orthodox. But the political differences cannot be so neatly compartmentalized. There are Orthodox rabbis and Sephardi leaders who favor Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, including Rabbi M.E. Shach, whose Degel Hatorah party has two seats in the Knesset, and Moroccan-born Eli Dayan, the mayor of Ashkelon, situated minutes from Gaza.

Nowhere does Mr. Podhoretz answer the argument he so blithely belittles that Israel cannot hold on to the West Bank and Gaza indefinitely and remain both Jewish and democratic. Israel has delegitimized Meir Kahane's Kach party for preaching the expulsion of the Arabs from the territories. If this is no longer an acceptable alternative, what solution other than a political one, meaning territory for peace, does Mr. Podhoretz suggest? The formula of territory for peace is not the peace plan of the Labor party alone. The government of Israel, including members of the National Religious party, agreed to this formula in voting for UN Resolution 242. Ten years later the government of Israel (headed by Menachem Begin) reaffirmed its commitment to the same prescription for peace in the Camp David accords, this time as part of the framework for determining the future political status of the West Bank and Gaza.

Mr. Podhoretz argues that Israel's intellectuals on the Left have increasingly distanced themselves from the majority of the Israeli people, meaning the Sephardim and the Orthodox. This is a familiar argument of those on the Right such as Allan Bloom and Paul Johnson, who take their cue from Martin Heidegger's condemnation of Socrates' "contemptuous and insolent distancing of himself from the Athenian people. . . ." Regrettably, Heidegger used this same argument as his rationale for casting his lot with the Nazis, the legitimate representatives of the "*volk*." Moreover, now that I. F. Stone of the far Left in his recent book *The Trial of Socrates* has joined in condemning Socrates' class snobbery, Heidegger's argument no longer belongs exclusively to the Right. The factual premise for Mr. Podhoretz's argument also is missing. The polls consistently show that a majority of Israelis favors Israel's talking to the PLO if it keeps its promise to cease terrorism.

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In all likelihood, the issue that Mr. Podhoretz dwells upon will be decided not on the basis of ideology—this division will persist after the political status of the West Bank and Gaza is determined—but on Israel's security needs. Here is where Mr. Podhoretz lets us down. Just as he does not explain why a political solution is not preferable to continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, he also does not explain how the existence of an independent Palestinian state west of the Jordan River will threaten Israel's security more than, let us say, a Jordanian political presence favored by Israel's Labor party and some leaders of the Right, including, so it seems, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, who in a recent address to the American Jewish Committee's Board of Governors in Jerusalem spoke about the need to bring Jordan back to the negotiations. As a result, the reader is left with no choice but to accept Mr. Podhoretz's military judgment on an issue that has a long list of respected Israeli generals on the other side.

The fact is that American Jews have little, if anything, worthwhile to contribute to the security issue facing Israel today on the West Bank and Gaza. The less said from the Diaspora, the better. The issue will be decided the only place it can be, in Israel, through the Israeli political system. In the meantime, those calling for one solution or another from a distance of 6,000 miles are a little like John Wayne, who was a hero only to people who confused the movies with real life where people pay for their mistakes. The same goes for those who rush to embrace Yasir Arafat; for the Grand Rabbi of Lubavitch, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who from his headquarters in Brooklyn calls on Israel not to surrender one inch of *Eretz Yisrael*; and for the editor of COMMENTARY, who, in his jeremiad, suggests to the world that the permanence of Israel is debatable.

At the end of his article Mr. Podhoretz concludes that the blood "of complicity [for the destruction of Israel] is on the hands of almost everyone in the world—on the Left but also on the Right and the Center. . . ." This does not leave many blameless. Israel is a small country that depends for survival on support outside Israel from the Left, Center, and Right, particularly in

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the United States. To attack any one of these groups risks losing important support for Israel; to attack all three has the potential of reducing Israel's supporters to the irreducible minimum, namely, Norman Podhoretz.

ALFRED H. MOSES
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's nightmare must have been spellbinding for COMMENTARY readers. If it caused one or another of them a sleepless night, that may be considered salutary. People *should* worry about Israel. . . .

Mr. Podhoretz looks at the present from the future. . . . Leaving this gimmick aside, his point is that Israel cannot survive the establishment of "Palestine" on the West Bank and in Gaza. Had he stated this in a straightforward article, his "Lamentation" would have been one more in an ongoing controversy. Instead, he finesses the requirement to prove his prophecy of doom. Was that because he wanted to spare us the gruesome details? Or did he want us to take his conclusion for granted?

I for one do not. I do not cherish any more than Mr. Podhoretz does the idea of having "Palestine" as Israel's neighbor. But this would not be the end of Israel. (In 1948, let us recall, Israel would have gladly accepted a considerably larger "Palestine.") Nor would I buy a used car from Yasir Arafat. But that is what negotiations are for: to establish the necessary safeguards.

Secular Jew that I am, I do not believe that our Lord is a joker to have allowed a Jewish state to emerge after a hiatus of 2,000 years, only to see it disappear again after some forty-odd. I am not willing to write Israel off just to make a point. . . .

BENNO WEISER VARON
Boston, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . I fully agree with Norman Podhoretz that the *intifada* created a qualitatively new situation, for which Israel was ill-prepared, whose dynamic "sooner rather than later" must lead to the formation of a Palestinian state. However, I profoundly disagree with his hopeless conclusion that the creation of such a state must inevitably lead to the destruction of Israel. . . .

First, let me suggest what I believe to be at the root of this malaise: the sad lack of a more empathetic response to the Palestinian people's sad fate. . . . The Palestinians are the victims of the Arab world's deceit, treachery, and unscrupulous manipulation beginning with the Arabs' outright rejection of the United Nations' two-state solution in 1947. After over forty years of endless wars (whose only result was the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza), . . . the Palestinians finally decided that neither war nor terrorism could defeat Israel or bring them closer to their dream of independence and a peaceful life. The *intifada* was a desperate, spontaneous uprising of a whole population, an expression of its pent-up frustration with Arab and PLO leadership, as well as with Israel's suspected goal of absorption. . . . The uprising led to the formation of an indigenous leadership which speaks for the Palestinians' own aspirations. Both the PLO and the other Arab states—as well as Israel and the world—must now reckon with this leadership and adjust their policies accordingly. . . .

In my view, this local leadership speaks for the Palestinian people and seeks a solution based on coexistence between Israel and a Palestinian state. . . . Arafat must either be the instrument for realizing this aspiration or else suffer rejection by the Palestinians, who are now in a position to make their own peace—if necessary, without the PLO. In sum, the quarrel between the Israelis and Palestinians is not a quarrel between right and wrong but the morally more difficult dilemma of two rights, which can only be resolved by compromise and mutual respect. . . .

The major task now is for the Israeli leadership and the Jewish people to recognize the *intifada* not as a mortal threat, but as an unexpected opportunity, . . . a possible escape route for both peoples: for the Palestinians, from the endless prospect of wars, terrorism, and occupation, and for Israel, escape from the inevitable destruction of its democratic character, without which Israel is not Israel. . . .

Often in history, the moment of greatest danger proves to be the moment of greatest opportunity—if there exists the will. I believe this is such a moment. In fact, just as the need for resolution of the conflict is the most urgent, so the time is the most propitious, thanks to a fortunate conjunction of two factors: (1) The Soviet Union desperately needs peace and stability in the world if it is to have any hope of achieving its reform goals with indispensable Western, and especially American, assistance. Gorbachev knows that a Middle Eastern explosion would blow up those hopes, so he is ready for the first time in decades to reverse the Soviet policy of sabotage to cooperate with the U.S. to achieve a settlement; and (2) it is now crystal clear that the parties to the conflict are *structurally* incapable of finding a solution on their own and need the cooperation and guarantees of the U.S. and the Soviet Union to that end. So this is the optimum moment for both great powers to collaborate in pushing for a general settlement. . . .

Finally, I would ask the reader to take out an atlas and look at the map of the Middle East. What do we see? Tiny Israel, an isolated island in an Arab sea. Is it even *conceivable* that over time Israel could survive in this sea while engaging in hostile, forced occupation of the Palestinian land? . . . Surely, in the end, the world will not support prolonged occupation and subjugation. And in that futile effort, would not Israel lose its democratic character and be transformed into a military police state? In this context, I do not think it possible to accept Mr. Podhoretz's premise that "in retrospect it seems . . . obvious that a unified Jewish effort could have succeeded" in preventing the creation of a Palestinian state.

I have a vision of an alternative future: Israel, Arab Palestine, and Jordan joined in a common market—a "Benelux" of the Middle East—an engine to lift the entire Middle East into the modern world. A dream? Perhaps. But better a good dream than a bad nightmare. And if, in the end, despite everything we did or might have done, Israel is destroyed *because we accepted* a Palestinian state, the unbearable pain and anguish of the surviving remnant would at least be partially assuaged by the knowledge that our choice of paths was honorable, free of "shame and self-disgust," and that it is not we, but the world, that must be judged.

ELIAS SCHWARZBART
New York City

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his morbid fantasy about the destruction of Israel, Norman Podhoretz completely fails to offer an alternative, constructive or otherwise, to the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, as well as to the vigorous procreation of one million hostile Arabs in these territories.

Evidently, in projecting Israel's annihilation, he knows more about military strategy than 1,700 of the highest-ranking Israeli reserve officers, members of the Council on Peace and Security, who have asserted that Israel would not be in mortal danger without the West Bank.

In peace as in war, Israel will continue to exist on foundations of strength rather than weakness, on watchtowers of vigilance rather than trust. The complex struggle to achieve an accommodation with the Palestinians, as Israel succeeded in doing with Egypt, must be founded on military strength and security. It is not the best kind of peace, but the best kind is not the way of most nations. It does not have to be Israel's way, either.

[Rabbi] JACK D. SPIRO
Richmond, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One can admire the heartfelt poignancy of Norman Podhoretz's "Lamentation" without being blind to several of its flaws. Mr. Podhoretz does not note, for example, that a significant factor in the current revival of PLO fortunes was and is the failure of Israel to come up with a definite plan giving a reasonable amount of political autonomy to Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza. . . . An alternative to the PLO solution does not exist. The yearning for a "Jordanian option" is not a policy. . . .

Whether we like it or not, Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza may not be treated the way the Indians were in the early days of America. This does not mean that there can be no plan other than that of the PLO. But before an Israeli proposal can be accepted, it must first exist. . . .

GERALD B. FRANKLIN
Larchmont, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

My own "lamentation from the future" about the demise of Israel may be even more lacerating than Norman Podhoretz's. It goes as follows.

Beneath the competing commitments to Israel and to liberalism that tormented American Jewry in the 20th century was to be found an even more wrenching conflict between Americanism and Judaism. Long before Louis D. Brandeis and Franklin D. Roosevelt made liberalism a fashionable identification for American Jews, the leaders of American Jewry (Louis Marshall, Jacob Schiff) were staunch political conservatives. Yet they were no less tormented by issues of divided loyalty than latter-day liberals.

American Jews were never able to fulfill their yearning for an integrated American Jewish identity without sacrificing Jewish commitments. That explains why they distanced themselves from the plight of the Jewish people in virtually every major historical crisis of the 20th century: their initial response to Zionism was tepid, if not hostile; they were essentially passive when confronted with British and American appeasement of Nazi Germany and indifference to the desperate plight of Jewish refugees; they were in a state of paralysis during the *intifada* of 1987-89. Not very much, except money, was ever forthcoming from the American Diaspora. . . .

But even without the Diaspora, Israel might have endured—if it had remained faithful to Jewish, rather than modern Western, imperatives. In the modern era, however, the unity of nationality and religion, so fundamental in Jewish history, steadily eroded (except among the Islamic nations that finally destroyed Israel). After 1967, any determination to settle the land of Israel (precisely what Zionism had always been about) was repeatedly undermined by denizens of the cafés and beaches of Tel Aviv, who had a different set of priorities. The handfuls of committed settlers who returned to Judea and Samaria were spurned as fanatical zealots for doing only what Zionist pioneers had always done (always amid a hostile Arab majority). Once the Bible ceased to be a respectable source of Jewish inspiration (to say nothing of obligation), and once even Zionism was suspect ideologically, Israelis outdid themselves in delegitimating their own national purpose.

In my own academic field, history, the relentless revisionism of Israeli scholars ultimately deprived their people of respect for their own national origins. The struggle for national independence was dismissed as an episode of oppression; self-defense was depicted as military aggression; Arab irredentism was transformed into Zionist rigidity; the ingathering of the exiles was mere colonialism. It is little wonder that even Israelis came to believe that Zionism was racism; that "land for peace" meant something other than perpetual war; and that stones and Molotov cocktails, when thrown by teenagers, were the moral equivalent of nonviolent civil disobedience.

So the Third Jewish Commonwealth went the way of its predecessors. Soon there may be too few Jews even to compose lamentations. So it may be appropriate to recall the words of two resolutely secular Zionists. David Ben-Gurion, testifying before the Peel Commission in 1937, responded to a question about the source of authority for Jewish settlement by stating: "The Bible is our mandate." And Golda Meir insisted: "It is the essence of morality to ensure the survival of the Jewish people in the Jewish state." But modern Jews, burdened by an excess of morality, somehow managed to ignore this fundamental moral precept. They paid for their folly with their national existence. American Jews were silent spectators.

JEROLD S. AUERBACH
Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz has beautifully articulated what many of us have felt and observed about the conduct of the liberals toward Israel. . . . I would, however, like to question his use of the emotionally loaded term "occupation" to describe Israel's presence in the territories. . . .

How these lands can be "occupied" when there is no other country with a legal claim to them is beyond me. If Mr. Podhoretz thinks they *are* occupied, perhaps he could name the country to which they belong. Certainly they do not belong to a supposed Palestinian entity which is not a country, and has never exercised national sovereignty.

Unfortunately, even Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government has not clarified this matter, since Shimon Peres publicly refers to the territories as "occupied." As a result of this . . . blunder, American Jews, who are nothing if not mor-

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alists, have been encouraged (nay, required) to jump on the bandwagon and attempt to force a return of these "illegally held lands." Israel's plan—by not clearly legitimating its presence in the territories—may very well have been to keep open the option of trading the territories for peace. But the net effect of this lack of clarity has been to saddle Israel with the role of villain, even in the eyes of its own people. . . .

I believe that a solid ethical case can be made for the Jewish state as the rightful owner and possessor of the right to control its own safety, security, and destiny against an element within its internal population which, if unchecked, could bring catastrophe upon itself as well as upon the Jewish people. . . .

DAVID BASCH
West Hartford, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his warning of the probable consequences of certain trends among the Jews, Norman Podhoretz is perfectly on target. . . .

Mr. Podhoretz maintains that most American Jews were once "simply and unconditionally for Israel" and hence willing to defer to its concerns about security and also prepared to exert their political influence on its behalf. In my opinion, this description applies more to the generation that lived through the Holocaust than to the ones that followed; my personal impression is that . . . younger people display greater indifference to Israel and to issues of Jewish survival than their parents and grandparents did. The currently reported intermarriage rate of 40-50 percent is but another symptom of this indifference.

In any case, the reservoir of support represented by that previous attitude was squandered instead of being nurtured. But the blame does not rest solely with Israel's "national-unity governments" that kept sending mixed messages, or with the retired generals who felt free to criticize the government and its policies publicly. Well before those stupidities came a bigger and more fundamental one that Mr. Podhoretz does not really deal with. That is the total failure of Israel, since 1967, to seize the moral offensive.

There is no better example of this than the handling of the West Bank. Israel deliberately refrained from saying forthrightly and continually after June 11, 1967 that the territories taken in the Six-Day War were not only the spoils of battle but historically Jewish lands that had been excluded from Israel's boundaries only by the fortunes of war in 1948. Except for East Jerusalem, nothing was annexed. And in this failure . . . Prime Ministers Begin and Shamir were as guilty as any Laborite.

The failure to speak out left Israel in the position of the occupier of another people's homeland, saying in effect that it did not really want the West Bank but that no one else would be permitted to have it, either. The concept of the Palestinian Arab as a squatter on Jewish land, to whom Israel owed nothing, was never presented. . . .

The Arab thus was granted the moral high ground, and the status of oppressed victim. Indeed, he was eventually converted into the quasi-Jew whose homeland was snatched from him and occupied for the sake of the alleged security needs of the quasi-Nazi aggressor, Israel. Since that distortion of history—which Israel failed to counteract through any action of its own—seems to have gained headway among Israelis, why should it not seduce Diaspora Jews too? . . .

For every argument that Mr. Podhoretz makes as to the ultimate consequences of a Palestinian state, there is a corresponding one that militates against permitting the Arab population of Israel to grow without restriction. If present trends continue, the PLO need not fire a shot: if it waits long enough, even that portion of Israel behind the 1948 armistice lines will have an Arab majority. One need not support either the religious opinions or the political ambitions of Meir Kahane to recognize that the issue of population transfer must be seriously addressed. The present failure to do this on the part of Israel's current political and intellectual leadership will, if continued, ultimately result in consequences no less disastrous and final than those of the behavior Mr. Podhoretz so rightly indicts.

And here, too, Israel's dereliction is matched by a corresponding one on the part of Diaspora Jewry. Those who should be preparing the ground for a moral and intellectual defense of the extremely unpalatable actions that Israel will some day almost certainly be forced to take for sheer survival totally avoid any discussion of the entire issue. . . . They have abandoned the field to those who see the Palestinian Arab, if not exactly as oppressed underdog, then as someone with inalienable rights to the 20 percent of the Jewish homeland that the Arabs do not yet possess.

That failure, if not reversed, will in due course inspire yet another "Lamentation," even if we are spared the occasion for the one that Mr. Podhoretz has so eloquently composed.

ZALMAN GAIBEL
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The conclusions Norman Podhoretz reaches in his article could be averted, but only if Israel's people believe in the Torah, . . . which clearly commands Israel and the Jews to take control over their own land. . . . Numbers 33:50-56 orders Israel to take possession of its land and to transfer the aliens or non-Jews out of the land, with dire results if this is not done. Deuteronomy 2:2-5 gives the Arabs, as descendants of Esau, the hill country of Seir. That is Arab land east of the Jordan. . . .

All these biblical exhortations are the platform which will save Israel—but only if Israel wills it. The one and only Israeli who believes and espouses what will save Israel is Rabbi Meir Kahane. . . .

JACK C. STOLLER
Alexandria, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Today Israel is depicted as a giant that is strangling the efforts of a small people, the Palestinians, who are fighting for their homeland. But the truth is that the "Palestinian people" is a myth; partly the result of British imperialism, partly Arab propaganda, and partly media hype.

The most superficial historical survey shows that in the last thousand years there was a Palestinian administrative unit for only about thirty years, hardly sufficient time for a people to develop a love for its homeland. . . .

After World War I, Britain and France broke up the Ottoman empire into a number of artificial states, contrary to the wishes of Arab nationalists who were all for a united Arab nation. Under the British Mandate for Palestine, the Arabs became divided into three separate factions. One group looked to Syria as their state. A second, made up of Eastern Palestinian Arabs but with a sizable fol-

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lowing in Western Palestine, became instant Jordanians after 1922. The third group were followers of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Al-Hajj Amin Husseini, who fought for a separate Palestinian state. All three groups fought one another but agreed on one point—to return the land to Muslim rule, first by ousting the British, and second by preventing the Jews from establishing their own state.

In 1948, the British left and the Arab states tried to destroy the infant Jewish state but failed. From then until the Six-Day War, the Arabs of Judea and Samaria lived quietly as Jordanians and the stateless Arabs of Gaza lived quietly under Egyptian rule.

Now it is 1989 and we have the same players in the same game. Assad still has his maps of Greater Syria. King Hussein has the same yearning for Western Palestine as his grandfater Abdallah did but without his grandfather's courage. Arafat and the PLO have taken the place of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, though this time around his group is at center stage.

There is no Palestinian people. There are Arabs (Muslims) of various ethnic origins who live quietly under Muslim rule but are ready to revolt against Jewish rule. . . . The time is long overdue for Jews to abandon the illusion that the present conflict is a struggle of two nationalisms which claim the same piece of land. . . . Rather, it is a war of the Muslims against the Jews with the ultimate goal of the destruction of the Jewish state. . . .

JACOB GENDELMAN
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It is the province of religion to prepare men for the death they dread and to present them with a picture of what will happen after that death. Norman Podhoretz's article is filled with precisely such religious optimism. His elegy is a very fair summary of the response by Jewry to events leading to the death of the Jewish people. . . . But should the Jewish state of Israel be expunged, there will be no noble and tragic mourners such as those Mr. Podhoretz describes. The Jewish religion died long ago. Jewish folkways have been those of the prevailing society for centuries, and so-called Jewish intellectuals are similarly carbon copies of the surrounding culture. Jews themselves question who and what is a Jew.

The last real symbol of this scattered, beaten, history-burdened people is Israel. When that goes, there will be no shame, no self-disgust, and certainly no will to go on as Jews among the surviving remnant. . . .

HYMAN GAIBEL
Jerusalem, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I offer the following as an epilogue to Norman Podhoretz's horrifying "Lamentation":

Then, having destroyed Israel, Islam's paranoia increased, inflamed by the enormity of its crime, and it still feared the Jews, though few remained. And America, suffused by liberal sentiment for Islam, turned faster from its own Jews than it had from the state of Israel. It was only later that Christianity, one of the two remaining peoples of the Book, discovered that it had been the target all along—for manifesting to the world God's favoring of the Christian West, for relegating Islam to impotency in industry and science, for abandoning Islam to sand and burning sun. But now Islam would be direct at last: battle and vanquish the "Great Satan" and the West and set about proving that Muhammad would not forever deny Islam the verdant leaves of Eden.

ALBERT LEVITT
Torrance, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future" is a brilliantly lucid and penetrating analysis of the profound dilemma now facing that beleaguered nation. . . . There can be no quarrel with the proposition that since Israeli lives depend on the outcome of Israeli decisions, the Israelis must be taken to know better than anyone else what is best for them. Nevertheless, those of us who wish peace and well-being for Israel and the Arab world can still ask whether the Israelis are botching the job of getting world opinion to understand their plight. So far, what we see and hear from Israel is a hodgepodge of messages whose cumulative effect in shaping opinion seems to be negative in the extreme, especially in view of the violent media images of the Israeli response to the *intifada*.

At times we are told about the Labor party's willingness to talk to the PLO, and about clandestine or not-so-clandestine contacts between Israelis and Palestinians. . . . At other times we are told (for the most part by Likud spokesmen) that the Israeli government will never talk to the PLO because it is a terrorist organization. . . . These mixed messages bring about . . . confusion, ambivalence, and outright hostility toward Israel. They result in the widespread impression that the Palestinian revolt is properly directed against Israel, and that Israel alone bears responsibility for making the concessions that would end it. Rarely mentioned is the share of responsibility belonging to the Arab states for the dismal circumstances of the Palestinians and for tensions in the Middle East. . . . The real but insufficiently emphasized facts are (1) that Israel is still technically in a state of war with all but one of its Arab neighbors; . . . and (2) that while all Arab states have publicly advocated a representational role for the PLO, not one has publicly offered Israel a commitment to honor any agreement entered into by Israel and the PLO. . . .

The Israelis would certainly be justified in announcing that it would be absurd for them to attempt to negotiate with the PLO . . . without at least the start of good-faith negotiations for peace treaties with Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. . . . [For] whatever the PLO and Israel alone agreed to would be so risky as to be unworthy of the paper it was written on. It is simply not enough for the United States and the USSR to give their blessing to direct dealings between the PLO and Israel. . . . A deal between Israel and the PLO without participation by the Arab states as signatories would rest on the same quicksand as the deal under which Egypt and Israel assigned Jordan a role it never chose to fulfill. As long as a state of war between them and Israel continues, Arab states need only point to that as justification for whatever they choose to do. . . .

JEROME ACKERMAN
Chevy Chase, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz is to be commended for putting the current crisis facing Israel and its supporters in its proper perspective. The U.S. decision to open talks with the PLO and the failure of the American Jewish community to rally to

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Israel's defense on this issue is a watershed event. The possible consequences of this failure are every bit as serious as Mr. Podhoretz makes them out to be. His article serves as an important reminder that the stakes involved in this struggle are nothing less than the survival of the Jewish state.

The problem is that most Americans—Jews and non-Jews alike—seem to have forgotten that the Arab-Israeli conflict is not a dispute over the borders of the Jewish state but rather a dispute about the very existence of such a state. Instead of seeing recent events as the latest tactic in the forty-year Arab siege of Israel, many American Jews have succumbed to the lies and deceptions of the PLO propaganda machine. . . . The treacherous journey of Rita Hauser and Menachem Rosensaft to Stockholm to meet with Yasir Arafat was the logical conclusion to this trend. It is a cruel irony that among the midwives of the American government's shameful betrayal of Israel were so-called Jewish "leaders."

As Mr. Podhoretz points out, Jewish liberals have been unable to find a rationale by which they can defend Israel. They have accepted the idea that Israel is an illegal occupier of "Arab lands," and taken at face value the claim that the purpose of the Arab riots is to advance the cause of human rights. In fact, their goal is to push the Jewish presence out of the country. Instead of comparing the riots to American civil-rights demonstrations, these critics of Israel would do better to reread some history. They might then learn that the *intifada* bears a strong resemblance to the bloody anti-Jewish riots carried out by Arab mobs in 1920, 1929, and 1936. The major difference is that there is now a Jewish army to shield the Jewish population from the depredations of the rioters. Fifty years and many wars later, Arab irredentism and fundamentalist Islam still regard Jewish sovereignty in any part of Palestine as anathema. . . .

The American Jewish "establishment" has proved unable to cope with this crisis. A timorous and uncertain Jewish leadership has been overwhelmed by a tide of hostility to Israel. In the face of virulent attacks on Israel's legitimacy, all they have managed are halfhearted apologies instead of forceful advocacy. Jewish intellectuals have been recruited into the ranks of those calling on Israel to accede to demands for territorial surrender.

The PLO has exploited this weakness and its position has been immeasurably strengthened. The question remains: can Israel survive this drift toward appeasement, or is the nightmarish outcome envisioned by Norman Podhoretz inevitable? Some take refuge in the comforting illusion of the invincibility of the Israeli army, but it was precisely that sort of overconfidence that cost Israel dearly on Yom Kippur of 1973. Had that war taken place with the 1949 armistice lines as the jump-off points for the Arab armies, Israel might not have survived.

What is needed from Jewish leaders and intellectuals is conviction about the justice of Israel's cause. While the energies of world Jewry have been spent on deciding "who is a Jew," the PLO has gotten a head start on its two-stage plan to destroy Israel. If that plan is to fail, it is incumbent on American Jews, who are the foundation of U.S. support for Israel, to mobilize in its defense. . . . Those who would destroy Israel look on American Jews as a lever by which they can separate Israel from America and the vital military aid which it provides. . . . Norman Podhoretz's warning must be heeded. American Jews must write, speak, act, lest our silence and inaction be construed as a disavowal of Israel. . . .

JONATHAN S. TOBIN
Americans for a Safe Israel
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

By chance I read John Updike's "On Not Being a Dove" in your March issue before I read Norman Podhoretz's "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future." Reading the two articles in reverse order pointed up certain similarities in the reaction of the Left and the media to the Vietnam war and the present uprising in Gaza and the West Bank. At the same time, however, striking . . . differences emerged.

The most chilling difference, one that must torment the conscience of the most recalcitrant Jewish leftist, liberal, or peacenik, is that, in glaring contrast to America, Israel in the present struggle "cannot afford a single mistake" (Henry Kissinger). The cavalier advice the Left is giving to the majority of the Israeli electorate must be assessed in the light of past harm inflicted on the Jewish people by those who clamored for "universal justice" while disdaining their own people. . . .

The media treat the present phase of the Arab-Israeli struggle by means of a curious balancing act. Jewish themes of general or communal interest are given a congenial airing while Israeli events are tagged in the press with one-sided headlines and on TV as sound-bites of such things as Palestinian children being chased by Israeli soldiers. One side-effect of this treatment is the creation of a psychological wedge between American Jews and Israelis. . . .

Another difference between Vietnam and the Israeli situation is in the way Jews are being manipulated to collaborate in an assiduously orchestrated and brilliantly propagandized campaign to thrust a 23rd Arab state into the vital innards of Israel. This was succinctly expressed by Judge F.D. Murphy in an address to a group of liberal Jewish lawyers in March of this year. "As for American Jews who identify Israel with South Africa and Israeli soldiers with Nazi troops, what is it that so distorts, so unbalances your perception of Middle East reality?" Judge Murphy asked. He went on to say, "Standing on the east bank of the Hudson, you suddenly possess a wisdom about the occupied territories denied to the Israelis standing on the West Bank. After all, if you are wrong you will still summer on Cape Cod wearing your good-faith smile while vultures pluck the eyes from Israeli heads."

How could the Gentile judge have intuited that this "unbalanced perception of Middle East reality" is rooted partly in an obsolete but lasting holdover from the Lower East Side socialist past, from the doctrine that a Jewish state is a "reactionary plot to divert the struggle of the Jewish masses," and partly from the lingering 2,000-year-old discomfort with the unavoidable but distasteful requirements of a state struggling for survival. . . ?

The callous requirements of a peccable state make many American liberals cringe, even from their safe distance. The brutal wages paid for Israeli statehood bruise the kind soul of Woody Allen, for example, who grieves in the New York *Times* over the excessive physical force exerted over throwers of Molotov cocktails. Does he sug-

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gest that the Israelis assume an attitude of the robber in one of his movies, who shoves a "this is a hold-up" note to the bank teller and then keeps debating syntax?

Thinking over the conflict between the preservation of the state and the Jewish ethos, I was recently struck by an extraordinary confession made by an Israeli soldier to an American reporter as quoted in the New York *Times Magazine*: "I spent three months on patrol in the refugee camps. The first month, I didn't touch anybody. The second month, I started beating people. And the third month, I wanted to kill them all. I have no illusions any more." . . .

Reading this quote, I could not help musing: have Israelis adopted the standards of their neighbors? Have they abandoned the precept of the "sanctity of life"? Have they shed the Jewish superego and unleashed the group-survival instinct of the murderous id? . . . With trepidation I went over the report again only to find, for better or worse, that the confessing Israeli soldier was a "liberal Swiss-born Christian" turned kibbutznik and converted to Judaism. . . .

What caused this liberal Gentile from the peaceful Swiss meadows, neutral for centuries, to retrieve his dormant murderous survival instinct? The answer lies in the frightful manner in which the Arab-Israeli struggle is now being conducted, a manner not perceived by most of the world, fed on cursory headlines and sound-bites. PLO propaganda has adroitly converted a monstrous evil into a potent TV tear jerker, as well as a new military trump card: children as a weapon and a shield!

This cunning tactic is described in the same article I mentioned above: a soldier relates how it is not uncommon to "fight eight-nine-year olds." "They were stoning us," he reports, "and they were putting the women and children in front so we couldn't shoot. They know our orders now. They know when we can shoot and when we can't."

This heartless stratagem and the harm done to Arab children by prolonging the uprising and rejecting an interim autonomy which might bring about a cooling-off period and an attempt at an Arab-Israeli symbiosis, should give pause to those who try to pressure Israel into making the "single mistake." The price of failing to enlighten the American public on the *differences* between the Vietnam war and the present Arab-Israeli struggle by Jewish information agencies may well be the disaster foreseen in Mr. Podhoretz's "Lamentation."

HASKELL NORDON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I fervently admire Norman Podhoretz's article. I wish I could think he sees the situation too darkly. Dammit, I cannot.

WINIFRED SCOTT
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I could not get past the first paragraph of Norman Podhoretz's article. My mind balked and my eyes clouded over even before the end of the first sentence. For a moment, even drawing a breath was difficult. Thank you, Mr. Podhoretz, for striking at the heart.

DAVID WACHTFOGEL
Manhattan Beach, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Once again Norman Podhoretz has stirred my intellect and emotions. It is impossible to respond to his magnificent article except in personal terms.

I have grown up knowing only the existence of Israel, but have often wondered what I would do if Israel were to be destroyed. Now that I have two young children, I often wonder how I could explain to them that my generation, the one that came *after* Hitler, was the one that finally brought Judaism to an end. I have often wondered how my children could think of me as anything other than a coward or a fool.

I imagine one of my sons researching a paper for his undergraduate course on the "History of Self-Hatred" in the department of genocidal studies at one of the few universities that still admitted what few Jews were left. His research would lead him to articles in the New York *Times*, *Tikkun*, and the *Nation*, and he would . . . ask me how I could cry over the destruction of a Jewish state which the Jews themselves hated; how I could rant and rave about the anti-Semites who destroyed my religion when in fact it was the Jews, my contemporaries, colleagues, and co-religionists, who precipitated, encouraged, aided, and abetted its demise. . . .

I would then show him my old copy of Norman Podhoretz's essay and tell him that some of us did care. . . .

IRA SLOMOWITZ
Teaneck, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Thank you for the wonderfully resonant warning by Norman Podhoretz. It comes not a moment too soon.

It is very hard nowadays to be a Zionist. Not only are we attacked by our enemies, we are also attacked by our so-called friends. Hardly a day goes by without some assault in the press or on television, lambasting Israel for protecting itself against the *intifada* now in its second year. Every step taken by Israel to put down the rioting—whether by tear gas, by plastic bullets, by the arrest of suspects, etc. etc.—is harshly condemned. . . . No one seems to want to understand that Israel is literally fighting a war—a war of survival. No one seems to want to believe that Arafat, in his speeches in Arabic, vows the destruction of Israel (to be accomplished in stages). . . .

Nevertheless, we must take heart. We are not completely isolated. We still have staunch friends in Congress who recognize Israel as a strong and dependable ally of the United States in a very crucial part of the world. . . . We must hope that President Bush will uphold the promise made in his 1988 position paper: "We will not support the creation of any Palestinian entity that could place Israel's security in jeopardy." . . .

BEBE HOLTZMAN
Monticello, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am writing under the shocking impact of Norman Podhoretz's "Lamentation," and I sincerely hope that his dark vision of the future will never materialize. I am afraid, though, that Mr. Podhoretz's general approach is too optimistic, for he strives to place the burden of guilt for self-destructiveness, self-hatred, and suicidal inclinations mainly on the shoulders of the present generation of intellectuals.

I can assure your readers that at the beginning of the 1940's, when I was a student at the Hebrew University, the situation was in many respects even worse; at that time distinguished scholars, teachers, philosophers, and scientists of

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world reputation opposed the Biltmore program of 1942 (urging the creation of a Jewish state) on grounds that the establishment of such a state would necessarily result in a militaristic regime along South American lines. Their proposal was for an autonomous Jewish entity in "Palestine" under the protection of an international force. . . . How does this sound today?

Another proposal later made by this group—all very honorable and distinguished men who had come together in the Brit Shalom movement—was for the Jewish Agency to agree to a yearly immigration quota of 30,000 Jews. Moreover, without having been empowered to do so by any democratically elected Jewish body, they even presented their ideas to a supposedly "moderate" faction among the Arabs . . . , who immediately turned them down. And all of this occurred, let us recall, when the small Jewish population was being forced to make a stand against a hostile Mandatory government, when seven Arab states were preparing for an invasion of "Palestine," and when one-and-one-half-million Jews, survivors of the Holocaust, were languishing in refugee camps all over Europe, awaiting their redemption by *aliyah*.

The tragedy of our generation(s) is the arrogant behavior of these recurrent groups of Jewish intellectuals who want to force national suicide upon us by invoking their goddess of morality and progress. Another deplorable fact is the stubborn refusal of the Jewish masses to identify themselves with Israel through *aliyah*. If during the past twenty years half-a-million Jews from all over the world had immigrated, the present mortal danger of a second Palestinian state would not exist. But I believe that we shall overcome these obstacles; that is our foremost task. . . .

BENJAMIN UFFENHEIMER
Tel Aviv University
Tel Aviv, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Unfortunately, Norman Podhoretz is right in most of the things he says in his article, but his title is too pessimistic. It was the late chief rabbi of Israel, Isaac Halevy Herzog, who said, in the spring of 1948 when our prospects were none too rosy, that a "third destruction" would not occur. And nowhere in the words of our Prophets is such a possibility mentioned.

The West can be relied upon to abandon us in our hour of need—just as it did in the Holocaust. . . . Israel can still survive. What we really need now, however, is not so much financial support as a strong *aliyah* of about 100,000 young Jews from the United States and other countries in the so-called free world. We here in Israel are in the front lines and need more manpower from the rear echelons. That would be the best and the most useful demonstration of Jewish solidarity—with deeds and not words. . . .

PEREZ TURA
Rehovot, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In his excellent essay Norman Podhoretz is right in concentrating his ire on the intellectuals, both here and in Israel. They have joined the enemy and destroyed our values. According to them, we Jews have no rights in Israel. . . .

I hope Mr. Podhoretz will continue in the spirit of Jeremiah. The intellectuals may be beyond redemption, but the right-thinking people need encouragement.

MENAHEM STEINBERG
Lincolnwood, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's article is a stirring piece that chills the blood. I only wish it had been entitled "A Lamentation From *a* Future" instead of "*the* Future." In any case, his timely article may indeed shape that future. . . .

E.F. SCHMERL
Chabot College
Hayward, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Kudos for Norman Podhoretz's article in the March COMMENTARY. I certainly hope it gets people thinking. . . .

AARON LERNER
Royal Oak, Michigan

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . As a Bible-thumping, fundamentalist Christian . . . , I would like to offer my two-bits' worth of comment. Norman Podhoretz's article is one of the very best short summaries published to date of salient developments in Israel's brief history as a modern state. . . . Mr. Podhoretz has given us a mountaintop view such as can only have been put together by one who has ploughed the valleys and swamps gathering details. . . .

A salute to Mr. Podhoretz and to COMMENTARY.

TOM HUMBLE
Lockeport, Nova Scotia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One cannot but hope that, ten or twenty years from now, "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future" will be viewed as alarmist. In this instance, hope is a duty, and not an easy one. In the last year or so, I have been impressed by the number of people whom I always thought to be supportive of Israel but who now feel free to espouse positions long promoted by Israel's declared enemies. Perhaps they always held those positions but were previously inhibited from expressing them. It's hard to know. And it's impossible to know the accuracy of any perspective offered "from the future." But we can know what is happening day by day—the positions changed, the further changes proposed—and it all lends to Norman Podhoretz's "Lamentation" the ominous ring of truth.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations on a masterpiece, Norman Podhoretz's article in the March issue. . . .

Not long ago I spoke to a class at American University in Washington taking a course called "Middle East Alternatives." The absence of even a single question—in more than an hour of discussion—from a viewpoint sympathetic to Israel was a bit of anecdotal evidence of the erosion of Israel's position, as highlighted by Mr. Podhoretz. Afterward, a young man introduced himself to me as one of three Jewish students in the class of about 35. He indicated that two of them felt beleaguered when it came to the question of Israel, and the third "disillusioned." He implied, perhaps unintentionally, that apart from these three no one else in the class could be expected to come to Israel's defense.

I wish I could say that the warning contained in Mr. Podhoretz's article was exaggerated. I am certain it was timely.

ERIC ROZENMAN
Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs
Washington, D.C.

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Congratulations to Norman Podhoretz for "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future." . . . I was reminded, while reading the article, of the famous Pogo cartoon, "I have met the enemy and he is us." . . .

HARVEY B. SCHECHTER
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It would be comforting to be able to assume without reservations that the majority of American Jews are for Israel, as Norman Podhoretz maintains. While I make no pretense of scientific accuracy, in my forty years in this country I have arrived at an unhappy conclusion. Yes, American Jews, most of them, *are* for Israel, but too many of them are in the "I'm so sorry for them" category. They assuage their consciences with donations to the United Jewish Appeal. . . .

Even with this sympathy, we must remember that the aims and policies of Israeli Jews and American Jews are not identical, or even parallel; in many instances, they are actually divergent. . . . For example, American Jews were opposed to most of the domestic and foreign policies of President Reagan, who was seen in Israel as the best friend that country had ever had in the White House. It became clear to me in the course of a visit to Israel shortly before the American election that, given the chance, the majority of Israelis would vote overwhelmingly for the Republicans. American Jews, on the other hand, gave 65 percent of their votes to the Democratic contender and the Democratic platform, disregarding the fact that the party was in the grip of individuals and groups who are not necessarily friends of the Jewish state.

This divergence of opinion had to come to a head sooner or later, . . . but it is tragic that the gulf between Israeli and American Jews should be widening at a time when the world's opinion of Israel is at an all-time low, and the very existence of the Jewish state is at stake. . . .

SAMUEL L. TENNENBAUM
West Orange, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Thank you for your forceful and compelling "Israel: A Lamentation From the Future." . . . This article ought to become must reading for all who presume to wear the mantle of Jewish leadership at a time of muddled thinking and weakened backbones.

[Rabbi] PINCHAS STOLPER
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This letter is a personal expression of gratitude to Norman Podhoretz for his brilliant article. As I read it, I recalled my own reactions to the events Mr. Podhoretz describes as they unfolded. His analysis is precise and on target. . . .

DAVID NEIMAN
Newton, Massachusetts

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

The arguments made by Alfred H. Moses, Benno Weiser Varon, Elias Schwarzbart, and Jack D. Spiro, all of whom criticize my article more or less from the Left, are so familiar by now that anyone who has followed the debate over Israel's predicament knows the answers to them as well as I do. But with all due respect to those arguments—and especially to the cogency with which they are advanced by Mr. Moses in particular—they are mostly irrelevant to the point I was making in my "Lamentation From the Future."

First of all, contrary to what Mr. Moses imagines, I was not joining in with those who "from a distance of 6,000 miles" presume to offer a "solution" to "the security issue facing Israel today on the West Bank and Gaza." As I have repeatedly written during the past few years, I believe that any Jew who wants to participate in that debate should get on a plane to Tel Aviv and claim Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return; otherwise, by refusing to put his own life on the line, he forfeits the moral standing to advocate a course that could endanger the lives of his fellow Jews in Israel.

Believing this, I willingly plead guilty to the charge of failing to "suggest" a "solution"—a charge that Mr. Moses, having announced that "American Jews have little, if anything, worthwhile to contribute" on these matters, then turns around and levels at me, while also simultaneously compounding his inconsistency by suggesting a solution of his own (namely, "territory for peace").

But it is not only because I do not live in Israel that I offer no solution. The truth is that I do not think a solution (in the sense of a new political and territorial arrangement that would allow Israel to enjoy both security and peace) is at hand. There is nothing remarkable about this. Forty years is not such a long time, as history measures these things; and as against Mr. Schwarzbart's contention that a "good dream" is better than a "bad nightmare," we have the Prophet Jeremiah's warning about the dangers of crying "peace, peace, when there is no peace."

This does not mean that I think the present situation is wonderful or that it does not involve dangers of its own. What it means is that a PLO state—which, with Jordan having dropped out, is now the only available alternative to continued Israeli military control of the West Bank and Gaza—seems to me infinitely more dangerous. The people who keep telling us that "the status quo is intolerable" ought to be reminded that the last two countries of which those words were used soon discovered that there were worse fates than the status quo. South Vietnam no longer exists, and Iran got the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Another charge to which I plead guilty is that I failed to provide the details of the scenario by which a PLO state could lead to the destruction of Israel. But this was not because I was unable to do so. On several recent occasions, in fact, I have spelled out just such a scenario. Here is one brief version, taken from a piece of mine published this past February in the New York *Post* and a number of other newspapers:

" . . . [T]he minute a PLO state were set up, it would become another Lebanon, with various factions engaging in a bloody struggle for dominance. As in Lebanon, this would in all probability result in Syrian intervention, which would in turn require an Israeli response [which would in its turn almost certainly bring other Arab armies into play].

"Even if this particular chain of events did not occur, however, the new Palestinian state would seek to provoke a general Arab assault on Israel, in accordance with the 'phased plan' adopted by the PLO in 1974 and then revived at Algiers in 1988.

"This plan calls, first, for the establishment of a PLO state 'on any part of Palestinian land to be

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liberated' from Israeli control, and, second, for intensification of the armed struggle to 'liberate' the rest of Palestine (i.e., Israel).

"Many in the West, supported by a number of extreme Israeli doves, maintain that Israel, being vastly superior to the PLO in military power, has nothing to fear from a Palestinian state. But this incredibly complacent argument ignores phase three of the PLO plan, which envisages the triggering of a general Arab assault on Israel.

"In such a war, the military balance looks ominous for Israel. Since 1973, the Arab states closest to Israel have greatly expanded the size of their armed forces. They have also made huge strides in narrowing Israel's qualitative advantage (not to mention the chemical weapons some of them have acquired and have already shown themselves prepared to use).

"But would these states be willing to join together—as they did in 1948, 1967, and 1973—in yet another attempt to wipe Israel off the map?

"Arafat thinks that, with a little prodding from the PLO and tempted by the new vulnerability of Israel, they would. . . ."

To be even more specific, Iraq (as Charles Krauthammer of the Washington *Post* sums it all up) "is acquiring nuclear bombs. Syria already has poison gas. Saudi Arabia has long-range missiles. And now we learn that Libya, which is building a chemical-weapons factory, is acquiring long-range fighter bombers"—from that same Soviet Union, by the way, whose newly benevolent intentions toward Israel are celebrated by Mr. Schwarzbart. "At which country," asks Mr. Krauthammer, "do you think these weapons of extermination will be aimed?"

I could easily have included such "gruesome details," as Mr. Varon calls them, in my article. I could also have added others. For example, there are the demands that would inevitably arise (echoing those that were made in the Sudetenland in the 1930's and that led directly to the sellout of Czechoslovakia at Munich and its subsequent conquest by Germany) for "self-determination" for the Palestinian Arabs *within* the pre-1967 boundaries of Israel and specifically in the Galilee, and for a "return" of that region to the new Palestinian state. Israel would certainly resist such demands, but an *intifada* in the Galilee and even in Jerusalem would add a critical factor of internal vulnerability to the perilous loss of strategic depth that would be the price of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

Mr. Varon, then, is simply mistaken when he insinuates that I was trying to "finesse the requirement to prove [my] prophecy of doom." But obviously he is right in suggesting that I took it as virtually axiomatic that a PLO state represents a mortal threat to the very existence of Israel.

This premise is not something I dreamed up. Nor is it the exclusive property of the latter-day disciples of Jabotinsky who so trouble Mr. Moses. Indeed, since 1967 Israelis of every political persuasion—from Herut to Mapam—have been drilling it into our heads.

To be sure, some Israelis—grasping desperately for rationalizations that will enable them to bow with a little less anxiety to what they think is inevitable, or desirable on moral or political grounds, or both—have now begun changing their minds. Yet even today no more than a very tiny number are willing to come out openly in favor of a PLO state. As for the reserve officers mentioned by Rabbi Spiro and Mr. Moses, they do *not* say that Israel could live safely with a PLO state. What they say is that Israel's military security would not be seriously impaired by withdrawal from most (not all) of the West Bank. Other Israeli military men disagree, but in any event there is as yet no significant school of military thought in Israel which repudiates the premise that a PLO state would pose a mortal threat to the Jewish state.

If that premise is wrong, then the overwhelming majority of Israelis are wrong—and my article is wrong too. But if the premise still holds, it becomes the duty of every Jew, both in Israel and in the Diaspora, and whatever his political orientation, to do everything in his power to prevent a PLO state from being established. Jerold S. Auerbach, David Basch, Zalman Gaibel, Jack C. Stoller, Jacob Gendelman, and Hyman Gaibel, all of whom take issue with my article more or less from the Right, and with each of whom I have my disagreements (especially with Zalman Gaibel and Mr. Stoller on the matter of "transfer"), at least understand this overriding imperative. And so, of course, do the writers of all the generous words in the letters above, as well as the many readers who have expressed similar sentiments to me in private. Perhaps the fact that they vastly outnumber those whose letters show an erosion of Jewish resistance to the establishment of a PLO state may indicate that the Jewish condition is not quite so bleak as it seemed to me when I sat down to write my "Lamentation From the Future."

T.S. Eliot

To the Editor of Commentary:

In "What Was T.S. Eliot?" [March], Robert Alter takes a cynical view of Eliot's conversion to Christianity. But it should not surprise us that T.S. Eliot would so fervently champion the Christian faith, for Eliot, it seems, was always out of step with the times.

At a time when the "free-elective" system at Harvard was gaining popularity, Eliot was fighting for the study of the Great Books. At a time when totalitarian societies were on the rise, he was arguing for the "idea of a Christian society," one permeated with the spirit of religion and the spirit of the gentleman. And at the same time that hollow men were seeking redemption through secular liberalism and self-worship, Eliot was insisting that human beings needed to renew religious faith and commitment.

The British literary critic Lyndall Gordon views Eliot's religious struggles and conversion with a great deal more sympathy than does Mr. Alter. Miss Gordon contends in her book, *Eliot's Early Years*, that the turning point in Eliot's religious life and development came not at the time of his baptism in 1927 but rather in 1914, when "he was circling, in moments of agitation, on the edge of conversion." Miss Gordon bases her belief on a group of intensely religious poems that Eliot never published. In these poems, a bold convert, a passionate martyr, or a saint displaces the frustrated philosopher of the 1910-12 poems. . . .

During 1916 and 1917, Eliot was writing review-essays that criticized authors whom he believed were trying to water down Chrisianity to make the faith more acceptable to scornful intellectuals. He was especially critical of writers who removed from Christianity its ascetic, radical, and self-sacrificial aspects, and thus made it too lukewarm,

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too liberal, and, indeed, too effeminate; he sharply rebuked one writer for suggesting that following Jesus Christ could be made much easier. "Certain saints found the following of Christ very hard, but modern methods have facilitated everything," Eliot sardonically observed.

T.S. Eliot's rediscovery of Christianity, it seems to me, resulted from what Plato and Augustine so aptly termed "order in the soul." There is order in the soul when one lives a life of virtue, when one's thoughts and deeds assuage the intense demands of one's higher and nobler nature, contribute to the perfection of one's nature, and lead one to the author of one's nature, namely, God.

It was T.S. Eliot's craving for spiritual order and harmony that motivated his decision to become a member of the Anglican Church in 1927. "The acts of exorcism he performed in his poetry were not enough in themselves to rid his swept and garnished house of the evil spirits that threatened to dispose him," T.S. Matthews observed. For that, said Matthews, Eliot believed "he had to have the assurance of superhuman power. No distant, deist, Unitarian God could have sustained him." . . .

HAVEN BRADFORD GOW
Arlington Heights, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

No, I refuse to surrender my supposed uniqueness so quickly! Robert Alter, what have you done with my individuality, my singularity? I should have liked to continue to believe that I was alone in the 50's sadly intoning, "I should have been a pair of ragged claws. . . . " The lines so reflected my state of mind and being. And now you insist that my soulfully moaning T.S. Eliot's lines from "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" were simply a very predictable phase of the 50's adolescent *Angst*. In fact my best friend and I actually exchanged the very same book of T.S. Eliot's poems as the most meaningful gift we could think of for the other. I don't know if her favorite lines in Eliot were also "I should have been a pair of ragged claws . . . ," but Robert Alter posits that they probably were.

This enormous upset recalls my earlier disbelief, outrage, and fury after I read in Lewis Thomas's *The Lives of a Cell* that my presumed specificity and distinction from all other humans is as infinitesimal as the difference between the angle of one microorganism's tail and the slant of the next microorganism's tail. . . . Must I now come to the poignant realization that T.S. Eliot's lines in "Prufrock" also offered equally essential and heartfelt comfort to many others in the 50's?

SEPHINE MELROD
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It's not great
to celebrate
with tea and cake;
I'd rather
beat my breast
in deep distress
like Eliot, T.S.

F.A. MATSEN
Austin, Texas

ROBERT ALTER writes:

Contrary to what Haven Bradford Gow claims, my view of Eliot's conversion was saddened, not cynical. Nothing in my essay questioned the sincerity of Eliot's embrace of Anglicanism. I did say that it was a strategy of desperation, reflecting Eliot's radical inability to cope with the human here-and-now. The sado-masochistic martyrdom poems of around 1914 are of course an acute early symptom of that very inability.

I am pleased to note that Sephine Melrod and F.A. Matsen, like me, and unlike Mr. Gow, are able to derive some amusement from a topic that once evoked nothing but solemnity for so many.

The GAO

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wish L. Gordon Crovitz, in his article, "The Least Responsive Branch" [March], had got in a few licks at the General Accounting Office, an overstaffed legion of congressional minions who have a year-'round fishing license in the executive branch. Their fat travel budget enables these nuisances to junket all over the world at taxpayers' expense, conjuring up "findings" and reams of useless reports.

I have never seen one of them change a tire, fill a sandbag, dig a foxhole, or do anything else the least bit useful. They arrive expecting to be treated like princes, then stand around with pursed lips making small marks on their checklists.

These "accountants" and "auditors" spend a five-figure sum on their own travel and per-diem expenses in order to provide advice on how we soldiers could spend a few hundred dollars differently.

ROBERT FAIRCHILD
Arlington, Virginia

IQ

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

COMMENTARY has provided a service to the intellectual community in printing Daniel Seligman's thoughtful, informative review of *The IQ Controversy: The Media and Public Policy* by Mark Snyderman and Stanley Rothman [Books in Review, March].

Just as the careful work of Arthur Jensen twenty years ago was denounced for being politically incorrect, Snyderman and Rothman's study of the public response to the results of such psychometric testing is—surprise!—being ignored by the very media whose bias they document. To date, the only other reviews of *The IQ Controversy* to appear in major periodicals have been in the *National Review* and *Choice*. Moreover, not a single copy of the book can be found in the public libraries of San Francisco, Berkeley, or Oakland, California. Even at the University of California, Berkeley, the sole campus copy is in the undergraduate collection; there are no copies in the library's main collection, nor in its branch libraries of journalism, government studies, or education/psychology. When I inquired at the Ed/Psych Library why the book had not been purchased for its collection, I was told that the head librarian there did not consider the publishing house issuing the book, Transaction Books, "scholarly enough." Translation: the book denies some of the currently fashionable orthodoxies that have become entrenched in university departments and instituted as government policy.

Readers of COMMENTARY should note that another book published by Transaction, Michael Levin's *Feminism and Freedom* (favorably reviewed in the February 1988 issue) has suffered a similar fate. Since its publication in 1987, the book has been ignored by all the national media except COMMENTARY, *National Review*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Choice*. The last-named, an influential journal for college librarians to guide them

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in their selection of material, dismisses Levin's book as a "right-wing diatribe" and "a book of advocacy rather than analysis" which "is not a contribution to scholarship on feminism, sex differences, or public policy." Messrs. Snyderman and Rothman, like Mr. Levin, can expect their work to be vilified on the rare occasions when it is noticed at all. The makers of public opinion who have leapt to the defense of Salman Rushdie have strangely nothing to say on behalf of heterodox scholars in their own country.

Apart from the unofficial boycott of these two particular books, the doctrinaire anti-hereditarianism (or "environmentalism") promulgated by the media has had a chilling effect on intellectual life throughout this country, both within and outside academia. The genetic component of intelligence is deemed a topic too dangerous to discuss; also, any suggestion of intellectual or behavioral differences between the sexes or ethnic groups is denounced by totalitarian modes of argument—i.e., by accusations of "racism," or "sexism," etc. . . .

Prudent investigators who want to keep their government grant money flowing—not to say avoid being picketed or having their homes firebombed—know well what subjects to avoid. In the Soviet Union under Stalin the doctrine of Lysenkoism crippled the study of genetics for a generation because it failed to correspond to the facts of biological reality. With a similar contempt for empirical data, American ideologues, eager to impose their belief in the infinite malleability of human nature, ignore or condemn all evidence to the contrary. In the process, they have created an atmosphere in which intellectual inquiry is stifled, heresy is punished, and suicidal social policies are enforced by government decree.

ANITA SUSAN GROSSMAN
Berkeley, California

The Forests & the Trees

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter Shaw's article, "Apocalypse Again" [April], omits two very important considerations in the tenacious and tendentious propagation of predictions of imminent catastrophe. Researchers in the environmental sciences are in incessant need of generating funds, usually public funds, for professional survival and they accumulate enormous intellectual and emotional baggage. Having been involved in such pursuits (mainly at NASA) for over thirty years, I know the stakes and the temptations coincident with scientific research.

Just to cite one example: for a number of years I was closely associated with most of the authors of the famous (or to some people infamous) TTAPS "nuclear-winter" paper (so-called after its authors, Turco, Toon, Ackerman, Pollack, and Sagan) and indeed published a number of papers with them. Several of the papers were on the atmospheric model which lay at the heart of the TTAPS study. It simply turned out that while the model was quite adequate for studying *some* of the physics and chemistry of the particles formed by a volcanic eruption, it was far too simple for predicting "nuclear-winter" effects. So it is with all of the atmospheric models generated so far, including the model used by Jim Hansen, the principal prophet of doom regarding the "greenhouse effect." Moreover, it is most unlikely that an adequate model for studying the effect will ever be developed. Knowledge of this improbability stems from a new branch of physics frequently called "chaos theory." . . . Despite its questionable nature, the "greenhouse theory" is even now a potent source of funding for researchers, and many of them have developed an enormous professional and emotional stake in its public acceptance. A hungry and utopia-oriented scientist should not be underestimated! . . .

ROBERT C. WHITTEN
Cupertino, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Peter Shaw writes of "the mistaken assumption that forests worldwide are decreasing in size (they are not)." I would like to know how Mr. Shaw justifies this, what I consider, amazing statement.

HAROLD ENTEN
Bronx, New Yorx

PETER SHAW writes:

Robert C. Whitten's example of how the limitations of science can combine with the self-interested and/or altruistic motives of scientists fills in a part of the puzzle of why we are increasingly subject to irresponsible apocalypticism.

In reply to Harold Enten, my source for the statement about world forestation is "Global Forests," a survey of world forest studies by Roger A. Sedjo and Marion Clawson printed in Julian L. Simon and Herman Kahn's *The Resourceful Earth* (1984). Sedjo and Clawson conclude that "there is certainly nothing in the data to suggest that the world is experiencing significant net deforestation."

Estimates of how much forest there is in the world vary from approximately 2½ million to approximately 6 million hectares. We do not know either how much forest exists or by how much it may be increasing or decreasing. The best guess seems to be that forests in the industrialized countries, despite all the hoopla over acid rain, are either stable or increasing, and that "while serious *local* problems of excessive deforestation do exist in some regions of the tropics," the net loss has been much exaggerated.

Efforts to prevent loss of forest acreage in the Amazon and elsewhere are to be commended. Apocalyptic exaggerations of how the loss affects the global forest balance are not—unless you believe in lying to support a good cause.

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How the PLO Was Legitimized

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

Some leaders win power through inheritance, some through elections, some through civil war or coup d'état. Yasir Arafat and the PLO are trying something different. They are attempting to come to power through international diplomacy—reinforced by murder. And they have nearly succeeded. Arafat himself believes that they are in "the last fifteen minutes" of a long struggle.

"The dawn approaches. Victory is at hand," he told the special session of the United Nations General Assembly that was convened in Geneva last December for the sole purpose of hearing the PLO leader state the PLO case.

Arafat exulted on that occasion. And why not? One hundred fifty-four members of the UN had voted for this special session. Now his appearance was being treated as the diplomatic event of the year. The UN Secretary General, some twenty foreign ministers, and more than two hundred ambassadors were present. An extended and enthusiastic standing ovation was further evidence of international approval.

Three days later the U.S. and Israel cast the sole votes against the resolutions that "acknowledged" the PLO's proclamation of a sovereign Palestinian state, authorized a commemorative postage stamp, and "affirmed" that Israel should "withdraw from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, *and from the other occupied Arab territories*" (emphasis added), and dismantle all Israeli settlements there.

The declaration of a Palestinian state, its recognition by more than ninety governments, and the U.S. decision to enter into a "dialogue" with the PLO marked a new stage in what has traditionally been called the Arab-Israeli conflict. No wonder Arafat thinks that the final phase of the "phased struggle" has now begun. Is he right?

How could he be? The PLO has no territory, no army, no independent resources. It is a government in search of a country. Yet watching Arafat and his representatives travel from capital to capital in quest of recognition and support, seeing friendly powers like the Soviet Union upgrade the status of the PLO mission from interest section to "embassy," witnessing the effort of this fictive country to win "membership" in UN agencies, one becomes ever more aware that the central tactic of the PLO is and has been to use the arenas and instrumentalities of diplomacy—especially multilateral diplomacy—and public relations to achieve legitimacy, and then to use legitimacy to win territory. The notion that might can make right is common enough in our cynical times. That a presumption of right could be the basis for creating might is a less familiar idea.

Traumatized by spectacular instances of violence, and by conventional conceptions of war, Americans—and a good many Israelis—have misconstrued the nature of PLO tactics. Both Americans and Israelis have been slow to understand that terrorist attacks are self-consciously political acts, and that the *intifada* is less an armed uprising than a political melodrama staged daily for credulous Western viewing audiences whose sympathies are quicker than their comprehension.

Of the *intifada* Arafat has observed: "Israel's state terrorism and its crises are being witnessed daily in every home in the world." Therefore this carefully orchestrated "spontaneous" uprising cannot be permitted to end. It is a major instrument for keeping the conflict high on the international agenda, for blackening Israel's reputation, and for brutalizing the image of its army. The youthful martyrs of the West Bank seem to prove the PLO's point: that the Palestinians are David and Israel is a heartless Goliath.

Worse yet, "The Israelis are the genocidal Nazis imposing a holocaust on us," PLO partisans have insisted, seeking to appropriate Jewish vocabulary, to invalidate the Jewish experience, to deprive Jews of their history, simultaneously claiming and obliterating the reality of the crematoria out of whose ashes the state of Israel was founded. Arafat himself pushes the analogy between Israelis and Nazis. He told the French weekly *L'Express* this past April: "We are a people who resist occupation exactly as the French in the times of Nazism. That which you did, we are also doing."

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, Leavey Professor of Government at Georgetown and senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, served as United States Ambassador to the United Nations from 1981 to 1985. Among her books is the collection, *Dictatorships and Double Standards*, whose title essay originally appeared in our November 1979 issue.

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II

THE struggle between Arabs and Israelis is a conflict about who should have the right to live and work and organize a government and constitute a state in the territories that are now called Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. The fact that United Nations Resolution 181 of 1947 partitioned the land included in the old Palestine Mandate into one Jewish and one Arab state barely affected the dispute. All Arab leaders rejected the partition as unjust and also declined to accept the verdict of three wars (1948, 1967, and 1973) concerning whose claim to the land should be honored.

There is disagreement among Arab governments about who has rightful sovereignty over this area, but all agree that it is not Israel. Arab states have aggressively pushed their case. They have fought costly wars and made it necessary for Israel to maintain large, powerful, expensive military forces to defend itself against them. But when Israel's military victories made the price of large wars too high, the struggle was moved to the UN, an arena whose chief activity is not conflict resolution (as is generally believed) but what has been correctly termed "collective legitimization" and "collective delegitimization."

Because Americans in and out of government normally pay scant attention to semantic battles in the UN, it was hardly noticed that the PLO was incrementally winning international support in a sustained campaign against the state of Israel, and in favor of its own claims. Arafat mentioned this error in his speech to the special session in Geneva:

> Fourteen years ago, when you told us in the General Assembly hall: "Yes, to Palestine, and the people of Palestine, yes to the Palestine Liberation Organization, yes to the inalienable national rights of the people of Palestine," a few imagined that your resolutions would carry no weight. . . .

He himself always knew better, Arafat assured the Assembly. He and his colleagues (with a little help and instruction from the Soviets) had never underestimated the importance of the international body. They understood early that as war is politics by other means, so diplomacy may be war by other means. They recognized the UN as a political opportunity and knew how to grasp it. They devised tactics for practicing the distinctive brand of bloc politics that passes for diplomacy in multilateral organizations, and they worked relentlessly in the UN committees, commissions, and agencies to deprive the state of Israel of legitimacy and to legitimize their own struggle and claim to power.

The PLO also understood the propaganda value of the violent deed. Hijacking planes; murdering a Jordanian prime minister, Israeli athletes, and countless Israeli and other civilians; killing would-be Palestinian rivals and Arab critics—all this captured worldwide attention and made the PLO's reputation as a terrorist organization. That reputation is today in doubt, not because the PLO has denounced terrorism but because, with patient work and diplomatic skill, the PLO and its allies have nearly persuaded the world to adopt a new definition of terrorism, one which retroactively legitimizes the PLO's aggressive violence and delegitimizes Israel's efforts at self-defense.

"The worldwide embrace of our just cause," Arafat told the General Assembly last December, "demonstrates clearly that the world has unequivocally identified the predator and the prey, the aggressor and the victim, the struggler for freedom and peace, and the terrorist."

The issue, Arafat knows, is not whether the PLO has used violence against unarmed civilians. It is not over whether the PLO *will* use violence again. The issue is whether that violence was and is justified.

THE basis of Arafat's assertion that the PLO has the right to use force rests on a long string of resolutions and redefinitions of the General Assembly stretching back to 1960. From these regulations have come new names for old acts—names as arbitrary as those conferred by Alice's mad queen, as dangerous as the bombs and bullets they seek to justify. Together they comprise the ideology which Arafat cites today to justify violence against Israel and to deny Israel the right to self-defense.

It is an ideology that integrates the Arab nationalist struggle against Israel with the struggle against "colonialism," "imperialism," and "racism," and in this fashion extends and exacerbates the conflict by involving countries in it that are remote from the Middle East. Anti-colonialism is meaningful to virtually all former colonies, which are thereby invited to identify the PLO's claims with their own fights for independence. The struggle against "imperialism" pits "progressive" forces against any country perceived by Marxists or quasi-Marxists as an obstacle to the "socialist camp." The struggle against racism asks the world's colored peoples—most of whose countries see themselves as part of the Third World—to join a coalition for one more battle against white exploiters.

The association of each with the others reinforces the whole. Moreover, each of these ideological terms is anchored in an organized group in multilateral arenas. Arab nationalism is embodied in the Arab countries and in the Islamic Conference. The "anti-colonialism" struggle is carried by the Nonaligned Movement (NAM). Anti-imperialism is pushed by the Soviet bloc and the "progressive" camp. Racism is a major concern of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

These overlapping blocs are the action units of multilateral organizations and multilateral diplomacy. Inside the UN, blocs function like political

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parties—they mobilize and "structure" issues and votes. They eliminate the need for individual governments to make their own decisions on issues. Together the blocs arrayed against "colonialism," "imperialism," and "racism" constitute the famous "automatic majority" of the United Nations. They reward loyalty and encourage cohesion. They can offer members protection from negative actions aimed at them. They can also deliver a majority against some targeted country or cause—such as Israel.

Support for Palestinian nationalism and the PLO by the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc has long been crucial to the campaign against Israel. The Soviets have developed and sponsored much of the doctrine and many of the key resolutions that have effectively transformed the UN Charter from a document designed to eliminate violence from world affairs to one that licenses revolutionary violence, and that have also associated Israeli democracy in particular with reaction and racism.

Nikita Khrushchev was the first ruler of the Soviet Union after Lenin to see the opportunities available to the Soviet Union in the struggle against "colonialism." In 1960 Khrushchev proposed a resolution to the UN General Assembly denouncing "colonialism in all its aspects" which was adopted as the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries." "All peoples have the right to self-determination," it proclaimed. And although Yasir Arafat, invoking this right, cited Woodrow Wilson in Geneva last December, it was clear from 1960 on that "self-determination" as defined and endorsed by Khrushchev, the General Assembly, and (later) the PLO was not at all the same as the *democratic* "self-determination" advocated by Wilson and affirmed by the UN Charter. Marxist-style self-determination, in contrast to the Wilsonian model, does not require popular participation. It means replacing a "colonialist" or "imperialist" government with a "progressive" regime allied to the USSR. It refers not to how government is organized, but to who governs.

The next major step in the development of the ideology of national-liberation movements also came from the Soviet Union. But this time it came from outside the United Nations, in a major speech in which Khrushchev clearly associated "self-determination" with "national-liberation movements" and endowed any movement which led a "war of national liberation" with a special historical role. Basing himself on Stalin's classification of legitimate and illegitimate wars, Khrushchev declared that an "imperialist" power fighting against a Third World country was engaged in an unjust "local war" which violated the UN Charter's prohibition on the use of force; but wars of national liberation and popular uprisings against "colonialism" and "imperialism" were, Khrushchev argued, "good force," a fulfillment of the UN Charter, not a violation of it.

Not long after Khrushchev articulated these distinctions, the United Nations General Assembly formally adopted them. Where the Charter permitted force by member states only to defend themselves against attack, GA Resolution 2708 XX (1970) created a new category of "legitimate" force which could be used *against* member states. This new right was confirmed in subsequent resolutions approving the struggle of "liberation" groups against "colonialism" by "all necessary means at their disposal."

Step by step the new doctrine was codified in the General Assembly. In 1970, with U.S. and Western support, the General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Nations" which further expanded the rights of "peoples" and restricted those of states by providing, *inter alia*, that "all peoples have the right freely to determine without external influences their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development, and every state has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter."

Moreover: "Every state has the duty to refrain from any forcible action which deprives people . . . of their right to self-determination and freedom and independence. *In their actions against resistance to such forcible action in pursuit of the exercise of self-determination, such peoples are entitled to seek and receive support,* in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter" (emphasis added).

With this declaration, the General Assembly, more clearly and unambiguously than ever, took the position not only that "peoples" had rights superior to those of member states, but that states resisting the rights of "peoples" could themselves become a "threat to peace." The General Assembly thus subordinated the principle of the "sovereign inviolability" of states to the struggle of "peoples" against "colonialism" and put important new restrictions on the right of states to self-defense.

The U.S. and the other Western nations joined in these resolutions without much thought, dismissing them as without significance outside the halls of the United Nations. This fundamentally frivolous attitude ignored the cumulative impact of such resolutions in focusing attention, in expressing what is widely considered to be "world opinion," and, finally, in having an impact on international law. As Michael Reisman has observed in the *Yale Journal of International Law*:

> In a relatively short period of time, majority votes of comprehensive conferences such as the General Assembly were deemed to be, if not international law, at least strong evidence of international law. By 1975, the International Court of Justice, which had become increasingly oriented toward the General Assembly, also adopted this position.

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And why not? The judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are elected by the General Assembly in a manner that represents the political configuration of that body. New rights and duties seep like ground water from the General Assembly to the ICJ because the latter is a creation of the former.

It should, therefore, have been no surprise when, three years later, a General Assembly resolution drew the logical inference of the emergent doctrine of national liberation and declared that henceforth not only would "peoples" struggling against "imperialism" and "colonialism" be permitted to violate sovereignty and territorial integrity, but that resisting them would be considered "a criminal act."

These new "rights" and "duties" have served as the framework for the legitimization of the PLO's attacks on Israel, and the condemnation of Israel's resistance. They are the intellectual foundation of the more and more widely accepted redefinition of terrorism and of the current confusion about what is terrorism and what is self-defense, what is aggression and who is an aggressor.

Thus, when the 1972 massacre of Israeli athletes at Munich, the slaughter at Lod Airport, and numerous attacks on planes and diplomats stimulated urgent demands for UN action, the then-Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, under heavy pressure from Western delegates to act and from Arab delegates not to act, finally asked the Legal Committee of the General Assembly to investigate and report on "measures to prevent international terrorism . . . *and* the study of the underlying causes of those forms of terrorism and acts of violence which lie in misery, frustration, grievance, and despair and which cause some people to sacrifice human lives, including their own, in an attempt to effect radical change." Yet some countries opposed even that equivocal formulation. The Soviet Union charged that the Waldheim proposal "could be used by neocolonialists to suppress the liberation movements." Others explicitly approved of and supported violence by "oppressed nations and peoples" and called on the UN to do likewise.

III

THOUGH founded in 1964, the PLO was not really mobilized until after the Six-Day War of 1967. Henceforth Arabs displaced by partition, war, and alienation—who had until then been referred to in all official documents as "Arab refugees" and treated as a refugee problem—would define themselves as the "Palestinian people" and would identify their situation with that of other victimized peoples.

Four additional defining factors were present virtually from the beginning. First, the PLO's principal component groups already had strong ties to Marxism-Leninism and the Soviet Union and presented their purposes in the context of the global struggle against "imperialism." Second, the PLO utilized violence in the fashion recommended by Georges Sorel and Frantz Fanon as "propaganda of the deed"—that is, as a means of attracting attention, raising consciousness, recruiting militants, and dramatizing the Palestinian struggle. Third, the PLO immediately focused on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza as its national constituency and on the United Nations as its natural arena, understanding the utility of the UN and the associated web of Third World organizations and the guarantees of the UN Charter as redefined. Finally, the goal of the PLO from its founding was the destruction of Israel and its replacement with a Palestinian state, as stated clearly in the Palestinian National Covenant adopted in July 1968.

The PLO Covenant remains an extremely important document because many of its key propositions have been incorporated in resolutions of the UN General Assembly, and because it has never been formally renounced (though Arafat recently suggested that it has been "superseded").

As the Declaration of Independence states the American claim to legitimacy, the PLO Covenant states the Palestinian case. The Palestinians are, it asserts, an authentic "people" who, having been deprived of their homeland, demand their right to self-determination and sovereignty. The Covenant declares that the struggle to "regain" the Palestinian homeland is a national-liberation struggle against the "forces of Zionism and imperialism." It further declares that "armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine." Armed struggle is described as "the overall strategy," not merely a tactical phase. The Covenant flatly rejects all forms of compromise or peaceful settlement or coexistence such as that proposed in Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council. The Palestinian people, "expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem. . . ." The Covenant proclaims that "the liberation of Palestine from an Arab viewpoint is the national duty." Arab destiny requires repelling the "Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland and aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine."

In keeping with the double-talk of the international revolution, the Covenant defines armed struggle as self-defense ("The liberation of Palestine from an international point of view is a defensive action necessitated by the demands of self-defense") and the state of Israel as an illegal act of aggression ("The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time"). The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and "everything that has been based on them, are deemed null and void."

In the eyes of the Covenant, Jews have no

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historical ties to Palestine, are not a people, do not constitute a "single nation" with an identity of its own. Jews are merely citizens of the various states in which they live. They therefore have none of the rights of a people, and all national movements which act in their name are illegitimate and should be outlawed. This applies specifically to Zionism, "a political movement organically related to world imperialism and hostile to all movements of liberation and progress in the world, . . . a racist and fanatical movement in its formation, aggressive, expansionist, and colonialist in its aim, and fascist and Nazi in its means. Israel is the tool of the Zionist movement and a human and geographical base for world imperialism." All states should therefore "outlaw" its existence and "ban its operation, in order that friendly relations among people may be preserved."

With its Covenant, the PLO thus claimed all the rights of a people under the redefined UN Charter and denied the state of Israel any rights whatsoever. That claim became more serious as the UN General Assembly began to adopt the PLO Covenant as its own, importing its key elements into resolutions and citations of resolutions. A first step was the explicit recognition of Palestinians as a people.

Until the adoption by the General Assembly of Resolution 2535 B XXIV in 1969, there had never been any mention of "Palestinians" in UN resolutions; they were, as already noted, "Arab refugees." But that landmark resolution spoke of the "inalienable rights of the Palestinian people," including the "right" of "self-determination." Indeed, Palestinians were now usually described not only as "a people" but as "a colonial people" whose struggle was identical with that of other colonial peoples. As the self-designated representative of this newly identified people, the PLO was ripe for designation as a national-liberation movement and its struggle as a war of national liberation.

But if the Palestinians were victims of colonialism, Israel must be a colonial power. Manifestly, Israel did not possess colonies. How then could it be a colonial power? By virtue of the fact that "colonialism" had already been redefined so that it was no longer a historical condition, but a political designation deriving from the relation of movements and countries to Marxist goals.

In any case, the argument was heard more and more frequently that Israel was not a "normal" nation of any kind. It was located in the Middle East but it was not an Arab nation, neither did it seem to be an Asian nation. It had been excluded from the first gathering of the Afro-Asian countries at Bandung. Its democratic system and its participation with France and Britain in the Suez War against Nasser, a founding member of the Nonaligned Movement, seemed to prove that it did not belong to the Third World but was rather a "tool of Western imperialism," or as was often said in UN corridors, "a Crusader remnant," which would be expelled as all earlier Crusaders had been.

The rise of the PLO's status and the undermining of Israel's inside the General Assembly were reinforced by a similar process within a number of institutions of the Third World—the Organization of African Unity, the Islamic Conference, the Nonaligned Movement. Thus Israel was not a member of the NAM but the PLO was invited to attend its summit meeting in 1969 as a guest. In 1973 at Algiers the PLO was granted "observer status," and in 1974 in Havana the NAM expressed full support for the Palestinian cause.

The PLO's pathway to international influence was also pushed by the Arab bloc, which itself was centrally placed in the network of overlapping Third World organizations. Most Arab states were members not only of the Arab bloc but also of the NAM and the Islamic Conference, and several were members of the OAU as well.

Two of the latter, Algeria and Egypt, worked inside the OAU to identify Israel explicitly with South Africa and to link the Palestinian problem with that of South African blacks. This campaign bore fruit when the 1973 OAU summit expressed support for Palestinian rights. A little later in the same year, on the motion of the OAU, the Algiers summit of the NAM adopted the "Declaration on the Struggle for National Liberation," affirming (1) Palestine as a case of colonial domination and exploitation completely identical with the situation in South Africa; (2) the legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people against colonialism, Zionism, and racism; and (3) the PLO as "the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and their legitimate struggle."

As if to underscore the point, the NAM summit also called on all nations to end diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural relations with Portugal, Rhodesia, South Africa, and Israel, and asked members to work for invoking sanctions against all these "colonial" powers. This action assigned Israel not only to the category of "colonial" states but to that of a "pariah" state, an abomination to be isolated by the "community" of "peace-loving" nations.

By 1974, the stage was set in the UN itself to follow up on these developments. "In many respects," writes Chaim Herzog, who was then serving as Israel's ambassador to the UN, "the 1974 session of the General Assembly was the reverse of the historical 1947 session" (establishing Israel). In 1974, Yasir Arafat addressed the General Assembly. Had the General Assembly had the power, it would surely have replaced Israel with a PLO state then and there. Lacking the power, it instead adopted Resolution 3236, which specified that the rights of the Palestinian people included national independence and sovereignty, the right to use all means to

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obtain these goals, and the right to support from other states. Moreover, all states were called on to aid the Palestinian struggle. During the same session the PLO was granted status as a "permanent observer," a status which gave it access to the arenas and resources of the United Nations.

Finally, on November 10, 1975, on the 37th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, the General Assembly declared Zionism to be "a form of racism and of racial discrimination." Israel's designation as a "racist" state was tantamount to formal designation as a target. From the perspective of UN ideology, *Israel had no rights.* The General Assembly had branded Israel's very existence as an act of aggression against the Palestinian people and thus too as *a crime against international law.* From this perspective, any attack against Israel was justified and any effort by Israel to defend itself was illegal aggression.

More was yet to come. In 1979, the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages exempted from the prohibition against hostage-taking any such act "committed in the cause of armed conflict . . . in which people are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination. . . ." Later in the same year the Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism issued a report condemning "the continuation of repressive and terrorist acts committed by colonial, racist, and alien regimes which denied peoples their legitimate right to self-determination and independence."

In these ways the General Assembly explicitly affirmed that the permission which had been granted national-liberation movements to use "all necessary means" included terrorism and hostage-taking. And in case anyone doubted that the permission was serious, the support offered to Abu Z. Ein in 1982 showed vividly that the General Assembly majority meant precisely what it implied: throwing grenades into a crowded Israeli supermarket—killing and maiming shoppers—was an act of "political dissent" and "self-defense" and was *not* punishable by law. For when, after two-and-a-half years of legal battles, the U.S. courts finally agreed to honor Israel's request for extradition of Abu Ein (who had been represented by a former U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark), the General Assembly condemned the United States and Israel. Abu Ein, it said, was a "freedom fighter" and Israel had no right to put him on trial.

Thanks in large part to this relentless campaign, much of the world is now confused about who is the aggressor and who is the victim, who is the terrorist and who is the victim of terrorism. Such confusion is manifest in the response to the various "concessions" of Yasir Arafat, which are themselves the most recent move in his ongoing effort to legitimize the PLO. The U.S. response in particular is evidence of a growing willingness to give Arafat the benefit of the doubt.

IV

RONALD REAGAN and his Secretary of State, George Shultz, surprised the world twice in their final weeks in office: first when they denied Arafat's request for a visa to speak at the United Nations General Assembly, and again on December 15, 1988, when they broke a long U.S. boycott and announced that the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia would enter a "dialogue" with PLO representatives there.

Both decisions were explained by reference to Arafat's words. Arafat had been denied the visa, it was said, because the PLO had not met the three conditions set in 1974 by the then-Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger: renunciation of terrorism, acceptance of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and recognition of Israel's right to exist in peace and security. But then, according to Shultz, "I didn't change my mind, they changed theirs." In fact, however, a leap of faith was required to believe that U.S. requirements were satisfied by the statements concerning PLO intentions toward Israel that Arafat made in Stockholm on December 14.

For years officials of the United States government and other interested Americans had been led to expect that Arafat was about to declare peace in his long struggle against the state of Israel, was about to accept Israel's right to exist within secure borders, was willing to settle differences within the framework of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and would renounce terrorism.

From 1982 forward, Egyptians, French, British, and Jordanians had predicted that a new, more moderate Arafat would soon offer the desired assurances. "Arafat is a very moderate person, . . . you will see," President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt assured George Shultz repeatedly. These predictions focused in turn on the PLO "unity" conference of April 1987 at which all PLO factions were present; on the meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) in November 1988; and on Arafat's speech to the special session of the General Assembly in December. Yet each occasion came and went and the participants and the communiqués belied the optimistic expectations.

The 1987 "unity" conference was especially disappointing. The conference expressed its attitude toward terrorism in deeds rather than words. Abu Abbas, wanted for the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* and the murder of Leon Klinghoffer, was made a member of the PLO executive committee, and two of the most extreme factions—George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Nayif Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)—were welcomed back into the PLO fold. Instead of the clear assurances hoped for, there was clear rejection of Resolution 242, the Camp David accords, and the Reagan Plan. There was condemnation of Egypt for having made peace, a pledge

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by Arafat himself "to continue the war against Israel until victory," and a reaffirmation of the "Zionism-is-racism" resolution.

Movement of a sort did take place between that 1987 meeting and the conference of the PNC in November 1988 at which the PNC unilaterally declared a Palestinian state. The declaration was accompanied by language that both did and did not accept the UN Resolution (181) which had partitioned Palestine into one Jewish and one Arab state. The PNC did not so much renounce terrorism as confirm its redefinition, and the affirmation of Resolutions 242 and 338 was accompanied by an affirmation of other resolutions of the General Assembly which made opposite commitments, especially all those dealing with Palestinian self-determination. Arafat was even less ambiguous in an interview with *Time* magazine in which he said flatly, "We are opposed to a Zionist state. Zionism is a racist movement according to a UN resolution. . . . We don't want a racist state in this area."

Arafat's speech before the General Assembly in Geneva also wrapped acceptances in rejections, "renunciations" in justifications, and in the end had nothing constructive to say to anyone who had hoped that he was ready to offer peace with security for Israel.

STILL, those convinced that the PLO was the road to Arab-Israeli peace refused to take no for an answer. A private group of American Jews traveled to Stockholm with a "declaration" which—it was reported—had been drafted by officials of the U.S. Department of State to meet our minimum conditions for "dialogue." Arafat signed the document. And George Shultz, who only two weeks before had refused to issue a visa to Arafat to address the General Assembly in New York, decided that the PLO leader had, at long last, met the American preconditions for a dialogue.

Though studded with ambiguities, the Stockholm declaration "accepted" Israel as a state in the region, "renounced terrorism in all its forms," and proposed an international peace conference on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and other UN resolutions. No one associated with either the Stockholm conversations or the U.S. decision to "recognize" the PLO inquired closely about what Arafat's "agreements" meant or implied, or about the degree to which they were binding on the various groups belonging to the PLO. Arafat's American interlocutors could not, however, prevent him from distancing himself from the document he had just signed. Though he found the statement "a good reading of the PNC resolution," he himself, he said, had not drafted the document, nor participated in its drafting. "I must assert I want to remove any misunderstanding after I have seen that certain papers attributed [the document] to me."

Moreover, "With all the respect that I had for the U.S. delegation," Arafat said, "I want to make it clear that I sign documents with officials and members of governments." Thus the "non-paper" drafted by the Department of State, and delivered by an unofficial delegation, had produced a "non-agreement" whose terms would, in any case, become subject to the endless reinterpretations and qualifications that always characterize dealings with the PLO.

According to Arafat, the Stockholm declaration restated his understanding of PNC decisions of the previous month. Both "accepted" the "two-state solution"—one Jewish and one Palestinian state—on the basis of UN Resolution 181. Yet not only did the November 1988 meeting of the PNC describe Resolution 181 as a "historic injustice inflicted upon the Palestinian people, resulting in their dispersion and depriving them of their right to self-determination," but Arafat himself denounced the "historic wrong that was done to our people" by the partition of Palestine in his speech to the General Assembly.

In short, the Stockhom declaration offered no clear-cut acceptance of a Jewish state. Instead it offered contradictions, evasions, circumlocutions. As there was no clarity about "accepting" a Jewish state, neither was there clarity about what its borders should be nor about what should be the borders of the new "Palestinian state." The declaration was utterly ambiguous. So have been later "clarifications." Is Israel to exist within its pre-1967 borders? Is the PLO asking for the 1947 borders specified in Resolution 181? Or what?

On the one hand, Bassam Abu Sharif, an Arafat deputy who speaks to the West, said in an interview, "We accept the principle of UN Resolution 181 rather than its specifics. The borders we want are those of 1967. That much should be clear seeing that we accept UN Resolutions 242 and 338 which talk about withdrawal to 1967 borders. . . ."

On the other hand, Arafat himself has addressed the same issues with less clarity: "The recognition of the state of Israel by me is based on UN Resolution 181, the division plan of 1947. Considered from a historical point of view, this resolution did an injustice to us. But I accept it. A Jewish and Palestinian state are to be established in Palestinian territory."

"What will be the borders of the Palestinian state?" an interviewer asked. Arafat replied: "We expect a peace conference to strictly implement all UN resolutions. *In them you find everything regarding the borders of our state*" (emphasis added).

Interviewer: "Would you expect Israel to have to cede not only occupied territory but also major parts of the country it has possessed for 40 years?"

Arafat: "We can negotiate on this at the peace conference. However, in any event we will demand the establishment of a corridor between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. And our demand for Arab Jerusalem is non-negotiable."

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The same ominous ambiguity about borders is found in the UN resolution the General Assembly adopted at the special session in Geneva which (to cite it once again) calls for the withdrawal of Israel from "the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, *and from the other occupied Arab territories*" (emphasis added).

The most recent and perhaps most definitive PLO statement on borders is carried in the logo of the stationery of "The State of Palestine." There is a silhouette. "Palestine" includes not only the West Bank and Gaza but the entire state of Israel.

Arafat has further declared that Jewish settlers and settlements are to be removed from the West Bank, but Palestinians everywhere will have the "right to return" to any place they formerly lived inside the present borders of Israel.

Concerning Resolutions 242 and 338 Arafat again made concessions and then denied them within the week. Sometimes Arafat said he had offered nothing new, having "accepted" 242 five times earlier. At other times (as in Abu Dhabi in late December) he said that the PLO's acceptance of Resolutions 242 and 338 was *conditional* on a Palestinian state, self-determination, and the right of return for all Palestinians. But since these "conditions" are not part of 242 and 338, such a statement is tantamount to not accepting the resolutions at all.

There is less ambiguity about the meaning of Arafat's "renunciation" of terrorism. Following the Stockholm meeting, U.S. publications rushed to the conclusion that Arafat had renounced the use of force and violence and would henceforth rely instead on negotiations. "It is better to talk than to shoot," observed *Time* magazine in welcoming Arafat's decision to rely on a "political" rather than a "military" solution.

But *Time* had evidently not listened to Arafat's Geneva speech. In it he made crystal clear his strong support for continuation of the *intifada* and provided an example of what he meant by terrorism when he paid tribute to a PLO official who had been killed, presumably by Israeli agents: "I offer a reverent salute to martyrs who have fallen at the hands of terrorism and terrorists, foremost among whom is my lifetime companion and deputy, the martyr-symbol Khalil-al Wazir."

The late Khalil-al Wazir, better known as Abu Jihad, was commander of the military branch of Fatah, which specializes in attacks on civilians. Israeli officials believe Abu Jihad masterminded the 1972 Munich attack that left eleven Israeli Olympic athletes dead; the attack on the Savoy Hotel in Tel Aviv on March 5, 1975, which left eight civilians (as well as three Israeli soldiers) dead and a score wounded; the coastal-road massacre of March 11, 1978 in which 33 civilians were killed and 82 wounded; and the Hebron attack on Jewish worshippers in May 1980 in which six civilians were killed and 16 injured. They also credit Abu Jihad with numerous attacks on Arabs critical of the PLO, including the murder of cartoonist Naji-el-Ali in London on July 22, 1987.

In choosing Abu Jihad as his example of a martyr to terrorism, Arafat exposed his semantic cynicism. Terrorism is not premeditated violence against Israeli civilians. Terrorism is an attack on an official of the PLO who leads terrorist actions against civilians.

Obviously, then, when Arafat "renounced" terrorism he did not define it as the U.S. State Department defines it: "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine state agents, normally intended to influence an audience." Obviously, if violence against unarmed and unprotected civilians is not to be called terrorism, if specialists in that kind of violence like Abu Jihad are not to be called terrorists but victims of terrorism, then we are in the world of doublethink and doublespeak, where words are emptied of their normal meanings and turned into their opposites. We are in a world where language depends on politics and on majorities of the General Assembly.

Arafat introduced still a new layer of ambiguity when, after being received in May by President François Mitterrand of France, he announced that the PLO Covenant had been superseded by subsequent PNC decisions. It was then, he said, "null and void," "*caduc*." This apparent "concession," which made headlines internationally, was partially retrieved when Arafat indicated that he was not prepared to call a meeting of the PNC to secure formal action on the Covenant. But without such action, Arafat's statement is only a personal opinion. The Covenant itself provides that it can be amended only by a two-thirds vote in a meeting called expressly for the purpose of considering amendments.

One step forward. Two steps back.

The long march through the UN has produced many benefits for the PLO. It has created a people where there was none; an issue where there was none; a claim where there was none. Now the PLO is seeking to create a state where there already is one. That will take more than resolutions and more than an "international peace conference." But having succeeded so well over the years in its campaign to legitimize itself and to delegitimize Israel, the PLO might yet also succeed in bringing that campaign to a triumphant conclusion, with consequences for the Jewish state that would be nothing short of catastrophic.

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Gorbachev's Strategy, and Ours

Edward N. Luttwak

As we watch the *glasnost-perestroika* express train advancing into the unknown, we need not refuse the profound satisfaction that liberalizations already achieved must give us, or renounce hopeful expectations of greater liberalizations to come, in order to focus soberly on the problem that Mikhail Gorbachev's new course presents for Western strategy. And it is a genuine problem of strategy—unlike the fixed predicament of the past. So long as the United States faced the unyielding continuation of the Soviet pursuit of aggrandizement, there was no true problem of strategy, because there were no valid alternatives to evaluate and select, except in matters of detail. What was needed was sheer tenacity, year after year, decade after decade, both in upholding a tolerable military balance, especially in its often disorientingly bizarre nuclear dimension, and in opposing the varied military, diplomatic, and covert forms of Soviet expansion, intimidation, and penetration.

It was indeed the most fundamental of errors to view the various regional confrontations between Soviet aggrandizement and Western resistance as a problem in need of solution. For given Moscow's relentless ambition, the confrontation was itself the only possible solution, and to treat it as the problem inevitably led to remedies that diminished Western resistance in some way.

The other great case of a solution being treated as a problem was the nuclear armament of the United States, with nuclear arms control offered as the remedy. As countless academic studies have proved to the satisfaction of dissertation examiners and the editors of our major specialized journals, nuclear weapons were always of very limited military utility because the enormity of their destructive power has always been most inhibiting, even aside from any fear of retaliation. So be it. But when the Strategic Air Command was formed in 1946, with some B-29 bombers left over from World War II, the armed forces of the U.S. were otherwise in a state of dissolution. Most of the 89 wartime Army divisions had already been disbanded and their troops demobilized, hundreds of Navy warships were being laid up, and tens of thousands of combat aircraft were sold for scrap or simply abandoned on airstrips around the world.

Perhaps it is true, as many scholars now hold, that Stalin had no intention of achieving further territorial gains after having annexed since 1940 Finnish Karelia, the Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, the Koenigsberg district of East Prussia, the eastern provinces of Poland, Czechoslovakia's sub-Carparthian Ruthenia, Rumania's northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, as well as southern Sakhalin and the Kurile islands. Less plausibly, it may even be true that Stalin had no desire to extend his indirect rule by way of local Communist regimes beyond Poland, the Soviet zone of Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

But if these things are not true—if, that is, Stalin's Soviet Union was like any other empire in seeking to project its power as far as it could go without colliding with dangerous resistance—it was only the Strategic Air Command and its one A-bomb Group of thirty B-29s that could provide an effective resistance against his armies, certainly not the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, or the Marine Corps, all by then reduced to scattered occupation units and training establishments at home bases.

Until the Soviet Union exploded its own first fission bomb in August 1949, nuclear compensation for Western non-nuclear inadequacy could be secured by the mere fact of possession. Ever since then, however, that compensation has had to be constantly renewed by further innovation: in the weapons themselves by the development of the thermonuclear bomb and then lesser refinements, but much more in the development of successive bombers, land-based ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and most recently the varied advanced technologies of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

Naturally, the Soviet Union responded as best it could, and sometimes it did more than that, having started its own thermonuclear program, as we now know from Andrei Sakharov, while American scientists and politicians were still debating its feasibility and desirability, and being definitely the first to field intercontinental ballistic missiles, albeit primitive and inaccurate. But most of the time it was the United States that led the competition in technological innovation, always in the attempt to maintain nuclear compensation for a persisting non-nuclear inadequacy.

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All this was frightening, of course, at least to the sensible and sensitive who actually thought about such matters, who actually brought themselves to visualize the consequences should nuclear weapons ever be used. And the mechanical obedience to nuclear-attack orders, so strenuously cultivated in the training of Strategic Air Command bomber crews and missile controllers, could only seem sinister, even to those who agreed on its necessity and ultimate justification.

It was out of such abundantly understandable fears that the urge came to impose limits, to stop the process of addition and innovation, and if possible to reverse it by disarmament. To be sure, only a few extremely unofficial voices ever advocated unilateral disarmament. But at various times "freeze" proposals were floated, with varying success, and ever since 1969 the negotiated reduction of nuclear weapons has been a declared aim of successive U.S. administrations, though pursued with different degrees of enthusiasm and effect. From 1972 on, as a result of the Jackson amendment passed in the wake of the SALT I accords with their unequal limits on missiles (but not bombers) in favor of the Soviet Union, the declared aim of U.S. arms-control policy was redefined as the negotiation of *equal* limits on nuclear forces of intercontinental range.

When viewed on their own, in isolation from the wider military balance in which there is a non-nuclear inferiority to offset, equal limits no doubt seem fair and equitable. In the total context, however, they remove any numerical basis for compensation, and impose reliance on innovation alone to preserve an advantage of modernity if not of numbers. Innovation became even more important when from 1983 onward the Reagan administration redefined the goal as equal limits set at very low levels. In fact, total abolition was actually achieved under the 1987 INF treaty for the narrow category of missiles of "intermediate" range.

But why should nuclear catastrophe have been risked during all the years since 1946 if there was that other option—namely, to build adequate non-nuclear defenses against non-nuclear Soviet attack?

In theory, non-nuclear adequacy was always obtainable, at least in Europe, because the Soviet Union has never had an advantage in population and means over the United States and its allies, not even in 1946 when Britain was the only U.S. ally of substance, and still less afterward as post-war Western Europe was gradually rehabilitated. In practice, it was only once, when it seemed that the Korean war might be only a diversionary prelude to an invasion of Europe, that the United States and NATO briefly attempted to plan for non-nuclear adequacy. A vast mobilization of ground forces was to be carried out, and military production for it actually increased for a time, but when the Korean war did not in fact spread, the intention was soon abandoned.

In all the years that followed until today, successive U.S. administrations have been inclined to spend rather more and most European governments have been willing to spend rather less, but both have refused the theoretical option of non-nuclear adequacy. The reason is often said to be economic, but it was always in truth impeccably strategic: security obtained by non-nuclear means requires an actual readiness to wage non-nuclear war, a "real" war with the maneuver of armies, massive artillery barrages, house-to-house fighting, bombardments (albeit non-nuclear), and so on. The danger of a much less probable nuclear catastrophe was and is preferred to a far more probable non-nuclear war, apt to be amply catastrophic in its own way, especially in today's Western Europe with its fragile yet lethal chemical plants and nuclear power stations.

Thus, while a great deal of money was spent on non-nuclear forces, and still is, by both the United States and all its allies, it was never enough to buy adequacy. Nor was the money spent purposefully. Instead of maintaining forces realistically trained and realistically equipped (like, for example, the Israeli armed forces), much of current military spending goes for sundry technical embellishments of dubious tactical value, luxurious accommodations for overstaffed headquarters, the upkeep of entire military branches sustained more by tradition and bureaucratic weight than current military utility, high salaries and better pensions in countries without national military service, and the upkeep of overlapping military industries throughout the NATO alliance and beyond (with Japan being the worst offender). All that is deplorable but also inevitable: with non-nuclear defensive adequacy rejected because non-nuclear war is unacceptable, there is no definitive military purpose that could serve to discipline military planning and budgeting.

The customary language of strategic discourse therefore masks a deeper reality: U.S. and other Western nuclear forces have above all represented a response to Soviet implacability in preparing for war—a "real" war, and realistically intended.

Implacability may of course be imagined or dubiously construed, but the intensity with which the leaders of the Communist party of the Soviet Union have overseen the accumulation of military power, and still do, allows no other interpretation. In 1946, while the United States, Britain, and such of their allies as had significant military forces were completing their demobilizations, millions remained in uniform in the Soviet armed forces, and a very ambitious rearmament was getting underway.

In spite of the catastrophic destruction left behind by the retreating Germans—with entire cities wrecked, dams sabotaged beyond repair, rail tracks pulled up, farms looted of cattle, and countless villages burned to the ground—1946 was the launch year for much new Soviet weapon production. In Kharkov, liberated from the Germans in

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1943, lost again to Manstein's counteroffensive, reconquered from the SS Panzer Corps after heavy artillery barrages and house-to-house fighting, the surviving population huddled in the ruins. But instead of hospitals, schools, or desperately needed housing, it was Transport Machine Plant Malyshev 75—a tank factory—that was rebuilt on a priority basis. It duly resumed production by the end of 1946 with the T-44 tank. The Soviet army already had many thousands of powerful T-34 tanks and heavier models too, but the T-44 was evidently considered somewhat better, and in fact that 35-ton machine with an 85mm gun was far superior to the U.S. 28-ton Sherman with its 76mm gun, which deactivated U.S. plants were in any case no longer producing.

Any other regime not implacably intent on preparing for war would have found a thousand better uses for the materials and skilled labor that went into the reconstruction of the Kharkov tank factory and the T-44 production line, but not the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Indeed, its leaders in and out of uniform very soon decided that the T-44 was not good enough; it was apparently considered unreliable. A crash development program was immediately launched, and within one year it yielded the first prototype of the T-54, an even better tank with a 100mm gun that was still formidable two decades later.

It was the same story with every category of weapon, from the Kalashnikov rifle placed in mass production in 1947, to field artillery, the first armored carriers, combat aircraft large and small, torpedo boats, destroyers, cruisers, submarines, and such costly ancillaries as assault bridges and submarine tenders. Over and above this enormous manufacturing effort that was unfolding while war production had essentially stopped in all other parts of the world, more skilled workers, engineers, and scientists were working at a feverish pace to develop new weapons, notably the first jet fighters and bombers, radars and anti-aircraft missiles and long-range rockets—and, of course, nuclear weapons too.

To begin to understand the implacability revealed by the postwar Soviet rearmament that started in 1946 within a few months of V-E day in a world disarmed or disarming, it is necessary to have some idea of the conditions in which the peoples of the Soviet Union lived at the time. Contemporary American notions of poverty are utterly misleading: at least in a purely material sense, they define conditions unimaginably luxurious by the Soviet standards of 1946. There is now a large memoiristic literature on the subject that one could cite, but it so happens that long ago I heard a *viva-voce* account from my own father, who visited Kiev in the winter of 1946. He was not a tourist from California captive to inappropriate standards. He came from Transylvania, the most backward part of Central Europe, and not unravaged by the war just ended. Yet my father was astonished by what awaited him in the Soviet Union's third largest city. He would have been even more astonished had he known that Kiev was then much better provided in both housing and food than many Soviet towns, including Moscow.

My father found the rather privileged people he met living in communal apartments, one family to a room sharing kitchen and bathroom. The middle class, so to speak, was housed in prefabricated huts (possibly U.S.-made leftovers from wartime lend-lease) sectioned into family areas by thin partitions or sometimes only by blankets or canvas sheets hanging from wires. The poor survived in the numerous shacks improvised out of crates and tarpaulins that lined the walls of every courtyard. Even in the apartment houses of the privileged, there was no heating other than from the primus gasoline flames used for cooking, because though electricity was supplied at night, no electrical heaters could be had, and neither was fuel oil or coal available.

While Kharkov's Transport Machine Plant Malyshev 75 was producing T-44s to supplement abundantly adequate T-34s and while great efforts were being made to develop the superior T-54, in Kiev many were dying of pneumonia that winter because the effects of the cold were compounded by the miserable insufficiency of the food: bread, kasha, cucumbers, onions, and radishes, with only salt herring and low-grade starchy sausage for protein, and that too in short supply. Throughout his one-month stay, my father did not see butter, eggs, or meat. Milk, he was told, was available but only for infants and ulcer cases—except that the ration often went unfilled.

To be sure, what was happening in Kiev and Kharkov and all over the Soviet Union in 1946 is not now attributed to the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Nowadays it is blamed entirely on Joseph Stalin by Gorbachev and many other Communist party leaders, who freely criticize Stalin's cruelties and irrationalities, even while reiterating their devotion to the party and its ideology. But it will simply not do to attribute the implacability of dominant military priorities amid civilian poverty to Stalin alone. Declared Marxists, of all people, should be the last to profess a Wicked Man theory of history; what about the structures and superstructures of Marxian theory, with its "scientific" proof that kings, emperors, and presumably dictators can only be the figureheads of ruling classes formed by historical processes? (It is symptomatic of the indulgence so lavishly extended to his non sequiturs that Gorbachev's simultaneous reaffirmation of ideological faith and his condemnation of Stalin is not being ridiculed as it deserves to be.)

For non-Marxists, on the other hand, the refutation of the Stalin hypothesis can rest on factual evidence. For Stalin was safely dead and already much criticized a decade after my father's visit to

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Kiev, and yet the Soviet Communist party's accumulation of military power continued implacably. By reliable accounts, most people in Kiev and other Soviet cities still lived in communal apartments, usually in sordid circumstances with even minimal privacy impossible, quarrels over shared kitchens and bathrooms inevitable, and ill-humor made chronic by overcrowding. Butter, eggs, and meat were also still very scarce. But 1955-56 were the years in which the Soviet Union's first Mach-2 jet fighters, gas-turbine warships, nuclear-powered submarines, and long-range ballistic missiles were being developed on a hurried schedule, not without the makeshifts and improvisations that are otherwise normal only when war is underway, or believed to be imminent. No other regime could have extracted the material and scientific resources from the economy that the Communist party of the Soviet Union found for its military programs; no other regime would have tried, at a time when Soviet poverty contrasted more starkly with the affluence beginning to spread in Western Europe, where most traces of wartime destruction had already vanished.

A decade after that, in the mid-1960's, a privileged minority in the Soviet cities had finally obtained one-family apartments (if very small and crudely finished) and food was a less urgent problem, though butter, eggs, and meat remained hard to come by. Nevertheless, the Soviet standard of living was still abysmal by the standards of all other industrialized countries, with normal consumption items in Western Europe still rare luxuries, or simply unobtainable. And yet the years 1965-66 marked the beginning of the greatest armament program in human history—a program which continued to grow cumulatively at a rapid pace for a decade, before decelerating to grow less rapidly but grow still for another ten years.

The results were vast. The Soviet Army was both expanded by a quarter, adding as many troops as NATO had in Western Europe, and also re-equipped almost entirely, with costly new self-propelled artillery, battlefield anti-aircraft missiles, and new tanks and combat carriers, as well as all the ancillaries of transportation and communications. The Soviet Navy was transformed from an inshore force (except for the submarine arm) to an oceanic navy with missile warships of excellent design, some large nuclear-powered cruisers (of a class rejected even by the U.S. Navy as too costly), the first air-capable ships for vertical take-off fighters, and the world's largest fleet of nuclear-powered submarines. The Soviet air forces were also transformed by an entirely new generation of combat planes, including the world's first supersonic bombers and the world's largest helicopters. And the Soviet array of land-based and sea-based ballistic missiles soon greatly exceeded the striking power if not the accuracy of its U.S. counterpart.

It was revealing of the sheer abundance of resources allocated by the Communist party that in many weapons categories the Soviet armed forces acquired separate and specialized models for each specific role during the 1960's and 70's, in lieu of the multipurpose types that all Western forces had to accept for economy's sake. Thus the twenty-year effort provided both air-superiority fighters and specialized interceptors, both close air-support and longer-ranged interdiction aircraft, both regular armored vehicles and lightweight types for the airborne forces alone, both medium and heavy ballistic missiles, and so on.

Again, what was done during those two decades and more is not nowadays attributed to the Communist party of the Soviet Union, but rather to the "years of stagnation" (a most inappropriate sobriquet as far as military matters are concerned) or, more specifically, to Leonid Brezhnev and his cronies. We now have a Bumbling Man theory of history—or would have if Gorbachev's regime were not also implementing limited, reversible, but so far continuing measures of democratization and liberalization, which imply that it was not Brezhnev after all who was responsible but rather the Communist party of the Soviet Union, whose power is being diminished in limited, reversible, but tangible ways.

If that were the whole of the current Soviet reality, and if the processes of democratization were sure to continue, there would be no grave strategic problem facing the West. True, the United States and its allies would still have to manage the delicate transition from the nuclear deterrence of Soviet implacability to a new relationship with a Soviet Union transformed into a normal Great Power. Like any other Great Power, this new Soviet Union that Gorbachev promises would no doubt strive to keep what it has, and would be eager for more if possible. But it would also be subject to normal inhibitions on its external conduct, and to a normal dominance of domestic priorities, including demands for higher living standards.

UNFORTUNATELY, however, there is another component of current Soviet reality, and a very familiar one. In Gorbachev's fifth year in power, with Brezhnev now condemned and Stalin dead for the last forty-seven years, the Soviet Communist party remains implacable in supervising the accumulation of military power. The U.S. defense budget has been in decline for the last four years, the defense budgets of other NATO countries are also in decline, but splendid Mig-29 fighters, heavyweight Mig-31 interceptors, an impressive new battle tank, and two mobile ballistic missiles (one similar to the ever delayed American Midgetman, one similar to the ever opposed American MX) are only the most advertised items in what is still by far the world's largest arms-building effort. And that military accumulation proceeds in a Soviet Union far more impoverished than had been realized until the revelations of *glasnost*. We now know that thirty-

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million pensioners have to live on monthly incomes of under 60 rubles a month (*less* than 60 U.S. dollars when it comes to buying butter, eggs, or meat); that Soviet hospitals are so ill-supplied that patients must bribe attendants to obtain bedpans and bandages, with such prosaic items as hypodermic syringes very scarce; and that even the low living standards observed in Moscow, Leningrad, and other long-visited cities remain unachieved in many other places.

In a world where Danes and Belgians cannot "afford" to allocate 3 percent of their gross national product to defense, and where Americans will not agree to much more than 5 percent, in spite of living standards that are no longer even comparable with those of the Soviet Union (all comparisons across exchange rates are void when it takes skill, luck, or connections to obtain the steak or the pound of butter that Americans, Belgians, or Danes "pick up" on their way home), the implacability of 1989 differs only slightly from that of 1946.

Gorbachev has promised a forthcoming 14-percent reduction in military expenditures by 1991.* But since his dramatic announcement failed to contain the information that Soviet military expenditures increased by roughly 3 percent per annum in the three years from his accession to power through 1987, one cannot say whether the reduction will be greater or smaller than the increase. Gorbachev has now declared that all previously published Soviet defense-budget figures were false and has supplied his own figure for current spending as 77.3 billion rubles, some three times as high as the false numbers of the past. But 77.3 billion rubles is only $128 billion even at the greatly inflated official rate of exchange—less than half of U.S. military spending—and the enormity of Soviet military power cannot possibly come that cheap.

The fact that the new budget figure is misleading does not, however, indicate a deceptive intent in the Stalinist manner. Again, thanks to *glasnost*, we now know that Gorbachev simply cannot provide the Soviet defense-budget numbers, because aircraft, submarines, missiles, and the rest, *and* their separate components, *and* the materials that go into them, are all priced on hopelessly misleading scales whereby a worker could buy either three pounds of coffee or a tank with his monthly salary, if either were on sale.

We are now told that bookkeepers, economists, and assorted other experts are collecting figures from all the various weapons-building ministries and the armed forces in order to compile a meaningful defense budget. They will certainly need a great deal of talent to succeed, for without a market to set prices how does one determine what each weapon costs? In trade within the Eastern bloc, the problem was solved long ago for standard commodities such as coal, oil, and base chemicals by simply billing at Western market prices. For all other products, officials on each side can only bargain as best they can in complex barters that equate so many East German cars with so many meters of Rumanian cloth, and so on.

In other words, the pricing problem cannot be solved at all, and throughout Eastern Europe the sovereign remedy has been to trade with the outside world as much as possible, especially with the West, leaving only substandard products unsalable elsewhere for intra-bloc trade. The new crew of Soviet budgeteers faces exactly the same problem. Because the inputs (aluminum, steel, machinery time, electricity, etc.) are also priced arbitrarily, the only recourse of the new budgeteers is presumably to look for comparable Western prices. They might now have to sponsor a novel form of espionage to find out Western unit costs for mortars and jet fighters, nuclear-powered submarines and ballistic missiles. Even then, complex adjustments will be needed to offset differences in specifications and production rates. The process is apt to take years, and given all the differences, the results will be uncertain at best.

It follows that no matter how sincere Gorbachev might be (there is now irrefutable evidence that he knows much more about the Western media than about the Soviet economy), he cannot in fact reduce the Soviet defense budget by any specific percentage as he has promised. He *could* stop costly development programs, of course, but so far there is no sign of that.

And here we come to a dimension of current Soviet reality and one specific antecedent which is a good deal more significant, and far more sinister, than Gorbachev's confusions about the basics of the Soviet economy. This is a reality that far transcends any quibbles or carping, and any impatience with the slow progress of liberalization in a sea of oppressive controls (photocopy machines are still under KGB control, exit visas are still a rare privilege). For it seems that along with all other Soviet institutions, the military industries too have received their *perestroika* assignment: to upgrade the quality of weapons, in order to offset as quickly as possible the promised numerical reductions in the armed forces. As Army General Alexei D. Lizichev, chief of the Main Political Directorate of the USSR Army and Navy, and as such a most senior figure in the regime, explained via Radio Moscow on February 12, 1989:

> Naturally, during these two years [i.e., *before* the reductions in troop levels] our industry, our scientists, our designers, our working class will create the equipment which will fill in for the quantity which we are reducing; that is, qualitative parameters will really come into operation.

* No doubt for the sake of the added plausibility of spurious precision, at the UN Gorbachev had stated the reduction as 14.2 percent.

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Unless the Lizichev statement is mere hot air, and there is every evidence that it is not, we must therefore confront the reality that, Gorbachev or no Gorbachev, the party's implacable policy of military accumulation is set to continue, albeit qualitatively rather than by mere volume.

Normally there would be nothing dramatic about the *continuation* of a process. But consider once again the circumstances: military budgets of the U.S. and all other Western nations are in decline and have been for some years; weapons production is everywhere slowed down; and the development of new weapons is being delayed. It thus seems that the 1946 rules are still in effect, even without Stalin, even with Gorbachev. Notwithstanding the numerous specific deprivations, some extreme, revealed by *glasnost* amid a generic standard of living much lower than in any other industrialized country, the Communist party of the Soviet Union, as General Lizichev now tells us, is not satisfied with two new mobile ballistic missiles, Mig-29s and Mig-31s, the new ultra-fast attack helicopter, and the rest of late-model Soviet military production: the "working class" and the rest must apparently work on a two-year crash program to assure that the "qualitative parameters will really come into operation."

The standard explanation is that Gorbachev is biding his time before "taking on the military-industrial complex." Perhaps—though he fired a Minister of Defense and several Marshals easily enough. But we now come to the antecedent that casts a sinister light on the totality of current Soviet policy under Gorbachev. Before his advent to power, during the militarily very dynamic "years of stagnation," the Communist party of the Soviet Union ensured that the Soviet armed forces were lavishly equipped in all respects, except one. For reasons that only philosophers may one day uncover with certainty, the development of advanced electronics could not be assured by abundant resources alone, as with other high technologies of military value, from aerodynamics to metallurgy, from rocketry to nuclear engineering.

That the Soviet Union should have fallen behind more and more as electronics advanced in importance, even while being so successful in rocketry and all forms of metal work (as exemplified by its titanium-hulled submarines), should not perhaps be so surprising, for the development of new electronic devices has also resisted the ministrations and vast funding of large, bureaucratized corporations. It has not been IBM and still less the Japanese giants so competent in the mass production of high-quality appliances that have given us the microcomputers and minicomputers, the high-speed chips and the higher-speed wafers, the supercomputers and the parallel computers, and all their peripheral ancillaries. Perhaps it is merely a matter of size: when innovation can take so many different paths and only a few lead to a desired destination, only a multitude of independent ventures is sure to contain some that do find the right path. Or perhaps it is a matter of free and fluid communications: when innovation is so rapid, enthusiasts who can freely exchange ideas will easily overtake scientists and engineers of equal competence whose intercommunication is blocked by security restrictions, the lack of reproduction equipment, travel restraints, and even telephone lines too unreliable for computer data links—as was and is the lot of Soviet electronics experts.

WHATEVER the true causes, it had become obvious by the end of the 1970's that the Communist party of the Soviet Union had at last encountered an obstacle that its proven methods could not overcome. That the Soviet consumer was thereby deprived of personal computers and all manner of computerized appliances was a matter of indifference to a Communist party that reserved all luxuries for a privileged elite of its own choosing, while denying even free access to butter, eggs, and meat to the population at large. But the military derivatives of advanced electronics were becoming increasingly significant in land warfare (ballistic computers, laser range-finders, etc.), ever more important in air and naval warfare (navigation and attack systems, missile guidance, electronic warfare), and potentially decisive in strategic-nuclear warfare, as exemplified by the varied advances so quickly achieved under the SDI program.

In other words, by the end of the 1970's, the true core of the entire Soviet system—that is, the system of military accumulation—was in a state of acute crisis. In response, from 1979 on, the then-chief of the General Staff, the Soviet Union's and the party's top military officer, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, pressed for change, using much of the language now made familiar all over the world by Gorbachev. He said nothing of liberalization or democratization, but he did anticipate all the major themes of *perestroika*, complaining of the stagnation of Soviet (military) research and development, pointing out that Soviet (military) progress would remain in a dead-end street without structural change, and stressing the importance of advanced (military) electronics in modern conditions.

In another anticipation of Gorbachev's methods, Ogarkov inaugurated a *glasnost* of his own by using the public prints to press his case. It had long been customary for high-ranking Soviet officers to publish, but instead of the routine mix of self-congratulation and exhortation, Ogarkov signed a series of increasingly strident articles* in which he claimed that action was urgent because the United States was actively preparing for world

* Reviewed by Abraham S. Becker, "Ogarkov's Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma"; and Jeremy R. Azrael, "The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command 1976-1986," in two RAND papers (R-3541-AF and R-3521-AF, respectively).

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war, demanded even greater military spending, and warned that beyond a certain point, technological advantages could become absolute, negating both superior numbers and better generalship—the traditional ingredients of Soviet military superiority.

On June 10, 1982, the few hours of air warfare between Israelis and Syrians in Lebanon confirmed Ogarkov's worst fears. That Israelis should defeat the Syrians in jet-fighter combat was not unexpected, but in the past all human and material factors had resulted in 10-to-1 or at most 20-to-1 ratios in favor of the Israelis. On June 10, however, the addition of a clear electronics advantage in Israel's fighter aircraft, missiles, and airborne early-warning resulted in a sensational air-combat ratio of 85 (or 89) to zero. Worse, the Israelis had begun the day by destroying sixteen batteries of Soviet-made anti-aircraft missiles (enough to equip a fair-sized NATO army) without losing a single aircraft, by using an array of U.S. and Israeli-made electronic-warfare devices (as well as excellent tactics).

That was the very kind of absolute technological advantage in electronics that Ogarkov had warned could utterly overcome numbers and devalue generalship, thus negating the entire Soviet strategy of military accumulation. In the aftermath of the Syrian debacle, Ogarkov's complaints became even more vehement, his demand for an acceleration of military research and for institutional reform (e.g., of the Soviet Academy of Sciences) even more outspoken. When in 1983 the United States launched the Strategic Defense Initiative, with its promise of unleashing technological development in many sectors previously neglected by the U.S. armed forces, Ogarkov increased his emphasis on the strategic-nuclear aspect of the Soviet Union's technology crisis, and raised the temperature even higher. It was thus Ogarkov and not Gorbachev who first breached the complacency of the Brezhnev regime.

Ogarkov's attempt to launch a *perestroika* for purely military purposes failed and because he insisted overmuch, in September 1984 Andropov finally removed him from his exalted position.

There is no doubt that Ogarkov's remedy was fatally incomplete. He had begun demanding greater resources for the armed forces at a time when the Solidarity crisis in Poland was inducing even Brezhnev to call for greater supplies of consumer goods and food, and he totally failed to see the necessity of a greater openness in mass communications and scientific discourse to stimulate and encourage domestic technological advancement. Above all, his only foreign policy was accelerated war preparation, overlooking the great contribution that arms control and a relaxed détente-inducing stance could make to the reduction of the electronics gap, by concurrently slowing down Western military innovation while increasing Soviet access to Western technology.

That is why the Ogarkov antecedent casts a sinister light on the totality of Soviet policy under Gorbachev. Except for the uncertain progress of democratization, *all* aspects of Gorbachev's policy, foreign and domestic, are compatible with the pursuit of a more modern *qualitative* form of military accumulation, with an emphasis on high technology in general and advanced electronics in particular. Reductions in *current* Soviet forces and "old-technology" military production—including any and all withdrawals of Soviet forces facing NATO in Central Europe—would obviously contribute to that objective and should not be misinterpreted as proof of diminished *long-term* military ambitions. And while Ogarkov's incomplete remedy would have failed, Gorbachev's version—which adds a literally disarming mass-media détente campaign throughout the world and *glasnost* to the restructuring of industry and the scientific establishment—is showing every sign of success, in its foreign dimensions at least.

Whether Gorbachev is witting or unwitting in his perfection of Ogarkov's scheme, whatever his true purposes may be, and no matter how they may have evolved, the facts are that Western military technology is advancing much less rapidly than it did, that the embargo on electronic-technology exports to the Soviet Union is increasingly being lifted, and that the various arms-control proposals are themselves reducing the technology gap, by systematically inhibiting the development of new Western weapons, in the nuclear realm especially.

Only the irregular progress of democratization and liberalization breaks the Ogarkov-Gorbachev equation. Every day there are contradictory reports. When Gorbachev or his Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, the ex-KGB official now sanctified by the media, pulls off another typical arms-control disinformation stunt (such as timing the clamorous announcement of the withdrawal of some outdated nuclear weapons to coincide with a NATO meeting), the Ogarkov-Gorbachev equation is reinforced. When Gorbachev guardedly defends the democratization under way in the Baltic states, or Shevardnadze takes a break from media manipulation abroad to conciliate opinion in his native Georgia, the equation is weakened. When we see the central authorities tolerating the spread of *glasnost* to remote regions of Siberia, one hypothesis is confirmed, and when we read of the new repressive decrees of the Supreme Soviet that threaten to reverse much of the liberalization, the other hypothesis seems more plausible. Probably the Gorbachev regime is moving on two contradictory paths concurrently, a common enough occurrence in governance everywhere.

This does not mean that our Soviet policy must await a final clarification that may never come, remaining passive under the increasing pressure of the impatient at home and abroad. There is in fact a valid goal for our Soviet strategy in

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general and for arms control specifically, but it is neither a totally inappropriate quest for "equality" in nuclear force levels that ignores the need to balance Soviet non-nuclear advantages, nor even a parallelism between nuclear and non-nuclear arms control, as some more sophisticated voices have suggested.

For reasons far from disinterested, the only valid course is to make Soviet democratization the key determinant not only of our arms-control policies, nuclear and non-nuclear, but of all policies toward the Soviet Union across the board, in regard to technology transfer, capital flows, joint ventures, trade in general, space cooperation, and more. Instead of allowing each of these to unfold in a narrow departmental context, wherein each agency of government is apt to pursue its own narrow goals (e.g., NASA's quest for more funding under joint U.S.-Soviet schemes), all relevant action should be closely linked to the progress of democratization, with specific moves on our part made or not made in response to what happens in the Soviet Union.

It is more than doubtful that the United States can actually promote the democratization of the Soviet Union by such means, except perhaps in small ways (as opposed to the enormous passive influence of the U.S. as an example of stable pluralism). And it would certainly be counterproductive to set preconditions for each specific move on our part, to publish a menu of U.S. concessions available in exchange for specific acts of democratization. We should not expect Soviet Communist party leaders, or indeed Russians at large, to be more open to foreign benevolence than the Panamanian opponents of General Noriega (it is another matter where non-Russians are concerned). But these objections do not apply to what is here proposed: to monitor Soviet democratization as it unfolds, and to act accordingly after the fact.

As noted, this would not be a disinterested policy. Democracy is a value in itself, but in suggesting that U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union should be conditioned by the progress of Soviet democratization, a specific and material purpose is intended. In 1989 as in 1946, the Soviet Communist party's method of military accumulation is to restrict consumption severely, allocate disproportionate resources to military purposes, and reserve a carefully graduated affluence for a hierarchy of its own selection. Aside from the party-state leaders themselves, in effect the *owners* of the regime, the hierarchy includes its defenders (senior KGB and MVD policemen, propagandists, etc.), those whose activities contribute to the regime's image at home and abroad (favored artists, athletes, skilled disinformers *à la* Vladimir Posner and Georgi Arbatov, etc.), and those who participate directly in the process of military accumulation (top scientists and engineering managers, high-ranking officers).

It should be noted that aside from securing material resources for its purposes, the simultaneous denial of affluence to the masses and its allocation to the chosen few also served and still does to procure talent for the regime: Posner might be making a fortune selling deodorants on TV if he lived in the West instead of being a prime Soviet propagandist; Arbatov could have made an excellent wheeler-dealer if not a confidence trickster instead of being a leading manipulator of useful fools abroad; and countless figures of less dubious technical talent who would have attained private wealth or fame had they lived in the West can satisfy their ambition only by serving the regime—because its method ensures that all professional activity remains very poorly rewarded unless it is directly regime-enhancing as well. While in the West private wealth sometimes bribes public officials, in the East public officials systematically bribe private talent.

Because the party has owned and controlled the resources of the entire Soviet economy, it has thus been far more powerful and more effective than a mere dictatorship. And, as we have seen, it has used this power to pursue military accumulation implacably.

But if the Gorbachev regime chooses to allow a continued democratization, both at the Republic and the all-Union level, both by formal political processes and by extending private and cooperative ownership, thereby also reducing the party's control over resources, it cannot possibly hope to retain stability while still enforcing its present priorities in allocating resources. Democratization without rising living standards cannot energize the Soviet economy as the party leaders intend, but only cause more riots, strikes, and protests (all already common). Thus unless the Gorbachev regime means to use *increasing* force to control the very political pressures that it is releasing,* it will progressively have to transfer resources from military accumulation to private consumption (and to investments in the consumer sector), and it will also have to allow the replacement of the present hierarchy of economic privilege with a natural hierarchy of economic achievement.

That is why the progress of Soviet democratization is the only possible guarantee that Gorbachev's policy is not just an improved version of the Ogarkov program for high-technology military accumulation, and should thus be the only guide of our own Soviet policy.

* A seemingly nonsensical course but by no means implausible: a new riot-control police is being organized. Even that, it should be recognized, is a component of liberalization: a fully repressive regime intimidates too effectively to face riots.

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The Curious Case of Chemical Warfare

Michael Ledeen

On the first of March of this year, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, William Webster, testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, quietly observed that the spread of chemical weapons threatens to change the strategic balance in the Middle East. Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Libya, he said, have all greatly expanded their chemical-warfare capacity. And along with the technology to manufacture chemical weapons, these same countries are working feverishly to acquire the means to deliver chemical weapons to their likely targets. Programs for new, longer-range missiles are under way, and in the meantime the Libyans have just acquired Soviet SU-24 intermediate-range bombers, complete with mid-air refueling equipment, putting virtually every country in the region—above all, Israel—within Colonel Qaddafi's striking range. In short, Webster warned, the most radical countries in the Middle East are either ready or will soon be ready to launch chemical attacks. (So is Egypt, though Webster did not mention it.)

In the cases of Iran and Iraq, this was hardly news, for both had already relied heavily on chemical weapons during their long war. Indeed, many in the United States government credit the defeat of Iran to Iraq's more effective use of chemical weapons—a lesson that has not been lost on the likes of Syria's President Hafez al-Assad and Libya's Qaddafi. Nor has it been lost on Israeli leaders. As Defense Minister Moshe Arens puts it: "Israel is concerned, not only by the recent use of chemical weapons, but with their conventionalization—the almost routine usage of gases on the battlefield without provoking any immediate international reaction."

Earlier this year, in response to such ominous facts, an emergency international conference on chemical weapons was held in Paris, in an effort to obtain a ban on their proliferation. But little was accomplished, and many Third World countries protested that this was simply another attempt by the major powers to relegate smaller nations to permanent inferiority. Some even argued that chemical weapons were the "nuclear deterrent of the poor," and that they would contemplate chemical disarmament only if Israel forswore nuclear devices.

Yet the events of the Iran-Iraq war give the lie to this argument. Neither Iran nor Iraq is poor (their oil reserves put them among the richer nations in the world), and chemical weapons, far from serving as deterrents to aggression, were integral elements in the Iraqi assault against Iran, and also in Iran's counteroffensives. And the Iraqis, delighted with their success against Khomeini's forces, then turned these weapons on the Kurds. (It was the campaign against the Kurds, in fact, that produced the first Western outcry against chemical warfare; no one had been much upset by the gassing of Iranians.)

Quite obviously, then, at least some of the nations that are developing chemical weapons have every intention of using them.* That is why Webster was so concerned about the matter. But he was also quite explicit in noting that a large measure of responsibility for this grim phenomenon belongs to parties outside the Middle East itself:

> Assistance provided by foreign suppliers, many of whom were fully witting of the intentions of the Middle East countries to produce chemical weapons, has been the key element that has enabled these nations to develop a capability to produce chemical weapons within only a few years. And, without this assistance, these Middle East countries would have been unable to produce chemical weapons.

Webster did not identify the "foreign suppliers," but everyone in the room knew whom he was talking about. For just a few moments earlier, Jesse Helms, the man primarily responsible for making this a major issue in the Senate, had introduced Webster with these words:

> We now know that with the witting assistance of German industry, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria have acquired or are about to acquire chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. . . . Forty-two German firms have been publicly identified as participating in this dirty business.

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* To this list, we must add Libya and Ethiopia, which have reportedly used poison gas in recent years.

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To be sure, German firms have not been alone. Several companies in Eastern and Western Europe, and in South Asian countries (principally Hong Kong, Thailand, and Singapore) have been involved in illegally transshipping Western technology for chemical-weapons manufacture and delivery systems, and the People's Republic of China has been an active participant as well. But Germany is the keystone of the international operations through which Libya, Syria, Iran, and Iraq have developed their programs.

The scandal first broke on New Year's day of 1989, in a front-page article in the New York *Times*: "Germans Accused of Helping Libya Build Nerve Gas Plant." According to the *Times*, the German firm Imhausen-Chemie had provided the Libyans with crucial expertise for the construction of their main chemical-weapons plant at Rabta, just outside Tripoli. In response to the story, the president of Imhausen, Dr. Jürgen Hippenstiel-Imhausen, made three amazing statements to the *Times*.

First of all, he said, the founder of the firm (his wife's grandfather) was "half-Jewish," and "we would not supply something like this to our enemy." The other two statements were of a piece with the first:

> The company had absolutely nothing to do with the allegations. . . . We don't even have the know-how in this area. We have no employees there, no technicians there either. . . . Libyans don't have money to pay for things like that. We totally deny any involvement in this.
>
> The Libyans are much too stupid to run a plant like this. All the Arabs are lazy and they call in foreign slaves to do the work.

He was wrong on all counts. The Libyans can indeed run such a facility, so long as companies like Imhausen supply them with training, technology, and chemical components. And Imhausen had done just that. A report from the German government to the Bundestag in February acknowledged that agencies of the Federal Republic had known for some time that Imhausen and "firms linked with it" had delivered to Hong Kong "know-how, blueprints, and plans" for the construction of the Rabta facility. Moreover, Imhausen had "probably" sent engineers to Libya (this became a certainty shortly thereafter) and the facility at Rabta was "not only suited to the manufacture of chemical weapons but was intended for that purpose from the outset."

Herr Hippenstiel-Imhausen not only lied to the New York *Times;* in late September of last year, he ordered his closest associates to cull all documents dealing with Rabta from the Imhausen files, and ship them to a subsidiary in Zurich. But the cover-up failed, and when the truth finally came out, the vice president of the company appropriately swallowed large quantities of poison in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid being called to account.

Imhausen's participation in the Rabta operation was considerable, ranging from all manner of technology to computer software to run the manufacturing process. Dozens of other German companies were similarly involved, including Siemens, the celebrated telecommunications firm, which sent the Libyans six "field multiplexers"—measuring devices for the electronic control of chemicals in a production process. As *Stern* magazine dryly noted, "The strange thing is that precisely six such measuring devices are needed for the production of the nerve poison Tabun,* which is made of six chemicals." (Siemens was particularly unlucky, for when the Libyans finally took some Western journalists around the Rabta facility, a container labeled "Siemens" was photographed by German camera crews.) Rabta may also be described as a joint East-West venture, since the Soviet bloc contributed special steel components and numerous engineers and technical experts to the project.

THE Libyan case is only the most publicized example of the pattern that has placed chemical weapons in the hands of the most radical countries in the Middle East. Thus, the German connection is also crucial to the chemical-weapons facilities in Iraq. A recent project near Baghdad, built in large part by the German construction company WTP, was said to be a "detergent factory," but as the weekly *Der Spiegel* commented:

> It would have been the best-guarded detergent factory in the world. A barbed-wire fence about 2.50 m high surrounds the entire complex which is about 1 km long and 600 m wide. The vacant ground on the other side of the fence and every point of the factory site can be seen from watchtowers. At night, the guards can check the ground with remote-controlled headlights.
>
> What is really produced . . . was indicated by a WTP man who was asked about the purpose of the giant underground tanks on the site: "Detergents for two-legged flies. . . ."

Similarly, the main Iraqi chemical-weapons facility at Samarra was made possible in large part by sales from Karl Kolb-GmbH & Co's Baghdad affiliate, "Pilot Plant." Kolb manufactures laboratory equipment and sophisticated instrumentation, just the sort of thing needed at such a facility. As Webster testified:

> From the program's inception, firms and individuals from Western Europe were key to the supply of chemical process equipment, chemical precursors, and technical expertise. West Europeans remained at Samarra even after it began operations. . . . At Samarra, Baghdad

* In one of its few mistakes, *Stern* got the wrong poison. The actual product was supposed to be Sarin, a nerve gas.

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produces the blister agent mustard and the nerve agents tabun and sarin. Several types of weapons, including bombs and artillery shells and rockets, have been filled with these agents.

As with Libya and Iraq, so too with Iran, where German companies also procured crucial components for chemical weapons. In 1987 and 1988, at the request of an official in the Iranian embassy in Bonn, the Chemco firm arranged to purchase large quantities of thiodiglycol—a so-called "precursor" chemical for the manufacture of mustard gas—from Alcolac, Inc. of Baltimore. To evade U.S. controls on precursors destined for countries like Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, the chemicals were shipped from Baltimore via Singapore and Pakistan.

In the Iran-Iraq war, both sides used Soviet SCUD missiles to deliver mustard gas (and, in the Iraqi case, even more lethal poisons) on their enemies. The Iraqis also used artillery shells with chemical loads and chemical bombs as well. From interviews conducted by *Stern* magazine with German workers from Rabta, it became clear that the Libyans in their turn were pursuing just such delivery systems:

> We were convinced that the giant halls, 36 meters high, for the lathes and milling cutters could only be designed for the production of missiles. Moreover, what did they need a 25-meter-wide feeder road for? Obviously only for giant vehicles such as are used for shipping missiles.

But by far the most ambitious program for a chemical-delivery system is the missile project known as Condor II, headquartered in the province of Cordova, Argentina. The Argentinians, with the help of German technology, developed a short-range missile in the early 1980's (Condor I), and they are now preparing a new generation. The prime German contractor—Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Blohm (MBB)—officially withdrew in 1985. But MBB's involvement has continued far beyond that date, as has that of the other main contractor, Italy's SNIA-BPD. At least as late as 1987, a subsidiary of MBB performed a feasibility study for the Condor II, a two-stage missile with a range of at least 1,000 kilometers and a 500-kilogram warhead. Argentina's financial backers in the Condor II project include Iraq and Egypt.

Technical support for Condor is managed through a Swiss-based consortium of sixteen European companies known as Consen; its most important subcontractor is MBB. When the British television show "Panorama" did a special broadcast on the Condor program earlier this year, it ended on this somber note:

> The Condor, with its chemical-warfare potential, is the beginning of a new generation of terror weapons. Thanks to European engineers, the Condor II prototype will fly in the next year. Then it will be for sale, and the West cannot control who will buy it. . . . There are about 20 to 25 Third World countries trying to get exactly the same capabilities. And when they have that capability, the international balance of power will shift, and it will shift forever.

MBB has not only contributed to the Condor project; it is also the key company in the development of the new Iraqi missile and chemical-weapons project in Mosul known as Saad 16. The cooperation with Iraq was so secret that even the metalworkers' representative on the MBB board of directors was unaware of it until stories appeared in the German press.

Finally, there is Egypt, which may be said to have started the chemical-arms race in the Middle East back in the days of Gamal Abdel Nasser, who used Soviet-made chemical weapons against the Yemenis. The Egyptians have their own part of the Condor II project, and were recently caught attempting to smuggle out of the United States sophisticated materials for use in nose cones. U.S. customs officials uncovered the scheme—run by an Egyptian military officer from the embassy in Germany, in tandem with two Egyptian-Americans in California—and arrested four of the plotters. The plan was foiled around the same time that the New York *Times* revealed that Krebs A.G., a Swiss company, had delivered to Egypt "the main elements of a plant that can be used to make poison gas."

We know why the various companies, from Germany to Italy, from the United States to China, Singapore, and Hong Kong, sold the dreadful chemicals, technology, and software that have made chemical warfare a reality. They did it for the money. And although they all say that they never really knew what was going on, and that they thought they were helping Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Iran build harmless "chemical plants" or "pharmaceutical factories," these are either outright lies or feeble efforts at self-deception. In virtually every instance, the companies took extraordinary steps to elude the surveillance of their own governments, created dummy companies in other countries, and falsified shipping documents, or permitted other companies to take such steps on their behalf.

In most cases, this kind of thing was hardly necessary, since the governments in question seemed singularly uninterested in finding out, let alone doing, anything about it. The German example is again instructive. According to the official government report, Western intelligence services, including the Germans' very own BND, were warning of the participation of German firms in chemical-weapons programs in Libya and other countries as early as 1980-81. Reports came in a steady stream over the years, yet virtually nothing happened. In the rare instances when someone got curious, justice moved at a glacial

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tempo. Thus, in 1983, the involvement of the Kolb company in the Iraqi poison-gas factory at Samarra was brought to the attention of the West German authorities by both Israel and the United States. Yet according to *Stern*,

> three years elapsed before the German judicial organs started investigations. At the end of 1987, customs investigators and public prosecutors searched several firms. Currently nobody can tell when the investigations will be concluded.

In the Rabta affair, the German government seemed determined not to look at what was in front of its collective nose. As far back as April 1980, the BND informed the Chancellor's office that "with the help of unnamed East and West German experts, Libya is developing a plant for the manufacture of chemical-warfare agents as well as a system for using them." But as the official German report reveals, not until January 1989 was the government able to conclude that the plant was really for chemical weapons, and that German corporations were really involved. During those nine years, there were repeated warnings from the United States, Britain, and Israel. Indeed, in the period from November 1983 to the end of 1988, there were no fewer than 150 démarches from the United States government on the subject of German involvement in chemical-weapons programs in the Middle East. And while one might wonder about the vigor with which American concerns were presented (former Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle has said that instead of "démarches" the American protests should be called "de-marshmallows"), the nonchalance of the Germans was still remarkable.

It was only when the New York *Times* put the Rabta story on its front page, and William Safire followed up with a stinging column on "Auschwitz-in-the-sand," that the Federal Republic finally bestirred itself. Around the same time, the Belgians also responded, arresting the man who had shipped the equipment for Rabta. This striking simultaneity suggests that the Europeans acted because they feared a politically damaging scandal, not because of any firm opposition to exporting poison-gas technology to the Middle East.

The lack of principled opposition comes out in the official report on Rabta, which over and over stresses the remarkable fact that no German laws were broken there:

> . . . no license was required for the export of the control unit, even to Libya. Under existing regulations, the export of know-how for the construction of chemical facilities . . . is likewise not subject to a license. And as far as the presence of German engineers and technicians in Libya is concerned, their involvement in the construction of chemical-weapons facilities abroad, either in the form of physical work or of technical consultancy, does not constitute a breach of the law.

Indeed, in the past several years, despite numerous American requests to investigate the diversion of technology and materials for chemical and biological warfare, the German government never once found a violation of its laws. Only now, in the wake of the Rabta scandal, has the government begun taking action. Jürgen Hippenstiel-Imhausen has finally been arrested, and legislation is being contemplated that would make it much harder for Germans to engage in the production of atomic, biological, and chemical weapons either at home or abroad.

It is, then, fair to say that up until the scandal became public, not only did the Germans not wish to know about the involvement of their companies in preparations for chemical warfare, but they did not wish to prevent it, either. The same, astonishingly, applies to missile technology, even though the German government is a member of the so-called Missile Technology Control Regime, an agreement among seven countries which prohibits the export of advanced technology in this field. Typically, each country is left free to enforce the agreement as it sees fit. Germany's choice was evidently not to enforce it at all.

Nor were such laws as did exist (licensing requirements for certain exports, for example) aggressively enforced. West Germany, in fact, has been the greatest single source of illegal transfers of sensitive technology both to Warsaw Pact countries and to the Middle East.

This has come about partly because of a series of traps of uniquely German design: the government needs a court order to investigate the records of a private company, but the courts are reluctant to give approval unless there is clear evidence of illegal activity. This Catch-22 situation is rendered even more difficult by the fact that companies can sue an individual government bureaucrat who dares to deny them an export shipment. Moreover, it is not illegal for German companies to transship controlled commodities (including chemical precursors or sensitive technology), since such shipments do not originate on German soil (or even touch Germany at all).

To make matters even more disturbing, some of the very same companies that today supply Israel's enemies with poison gas and missile technology were deeply involved in the activities of the Nazi era. To quote the historian Paul Johnson:

> Himmler wanted to use the war to create the nucleus of his slave empire and was not therefore anxious to kill Jews if he could get work out of them, particularly since he could get hard cash for his SS coffers from Krupps, Siemens, I.G. Farben, Theinmetall, Messerschmitt, Heinkel, and other big firms in return for concentration-camp labor. By the end of 1944

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over 500,000 camp inmates were being "leased out" to private industry. . . .

Even though Germany is the biggest sinner, however, all Western countries bear a share of responsibility for the chemical warfare that is now almost certain to occur again. For no country has fought with sufficient courage and tenacity to prevent the world from arriving at so dangerous a state.

The lack of passion on the issue of chemical warfare is stunning. We heard little if anything from the Reagan administration about Iraqi and Iranian poison gas, and then only when the Kurds were being slaughtered. We heard nothing on Condor. We finally heard something about our favorite monster, Colonel Qaddafi, and even threatened to bomb him. But this spasm of indignation soon passed.

As for the media, despite ample coverage given to the story, there have been few calls for the sort of action that might put a stop to the commerce in chemical weapons. Nor has there been any great outcry against the use by Soviet military forces of some sort of poison gas against demonstrators in Tbilisi, Georgia, this past April, even though (or perhaps because) their willingness to gas their own citizens suggests they would be willing to use chemical weapons against us in the event of war.

Is THERE anything that can be done to "put the genie back into the bottle"?

The most frequently mentioned solution—a treaty banning chemical weapons and their use—is impractical, since it is next to impossible to verify. As Qaddafi has demonstrated, even a massive facility can quickly be converted to "civilian" production, and it is hard to imagine the international community agreeing to rapid and efficient inspection.

Nor, alas, is the military option—the physical destruction of the chemical facilities by force of arms—feasible. For which among the Western nations would be willing to carry out the attacks? The only candidate for the task is Israel, which is after all directly threatened by poison gas. (Israeli leaders are understandably very fearful that Israel's cities will be targeted by chemical weapons, or that Israeli tanks will be doused with mustard gas, thereby slowing down mobilization in response to a Syrian attack.) But would Israel under present circumstances be willing to brave the inevitable international reaction?

Which leaves only one option: those countries that have tolerated the murderous traffic must put an immediate end to any further supplies, including service and spare parts. Even the best hardware will break down in the deserts of the Middle East, especially if expert maintenance is lacking. Therefore, while much damage has already been done, stopping the traffic might still produce some significant improvement in this grim and extraordinarily dangerous picture.

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Demystifying the French Revolution

David Gress

On July 14, France will celebrate, with considerable pomp and circumstance, the bicentennial of the French Revolution, or, more precisely, of that revolution's central symbolic event, the capture of the Bastille fortress and prison by a mob of hungry Parisians looking for bread and guns.

The Bastille represented the authority and repressive power of the government; the victorious mob represented the will and needs of a people determined henceforth to take the fate of the nation into its own hands. Viewed thus, the symbolism is simple and perfect, and that is undoubtedly how it will seem to those participants on the day itself who bother to reflect on what it is they are commemorating. For most, July 14 in Paris, and throughout France, will be a "prodigious feast of national unity and even of chauvinism," as the historian and demographer Emmanuel Todd told me when I called to ask about preparations for the great day. "The Republic is quite simply extremely popular," he added. "The Revolution is part of national tradition, and that is what we will be celebrating."

To illustrate his point, Todd described how the streetcorner *boulangers,* the little bakers who traditionally support the extreme right wing of French politics, including Robert Le Pen's xenophobic Front National, have without exception garlanded their shops in tricolors and are offering red, white, and blue *gateaux révolutionnaires* for sale. "If there were any constituency in this country truly hostile to the revolutionary tradition, that's where you would expect to find it. The fact is, it isn't there. Everybody, including the extreme nationalists, loves the Revolution, because it's become part of the very national tradition that they, in particular, are so obsessed with defending. We're all going to have a great time on July 14, no matter what the historians say."

No matter what the historians say: for so far as the historians are concerned, the last twenty years have indeed witnessed a radical revision of the formerly dominant views of the Revolution on which the celebrations on July 14 will still be based.

Thus, with the exception of a small remnant of diehard Marxists, associated, more or less intimately, with the French Communist party, the historians now see the Revolution as a "tragedy," "overwhelmingly destructive," the product of "harmful political passions." Far from representing any sort of an advance in freedom and material life, the Revolution is depicted as having polarized politics, delayed popular sovereignty, and interrupted the course of economic and population growth that France had followed during most of the 18th century. The result, it is said, was a stagnant, class-ridden, divided society, ill-equipped materially and morally to meet the challenges of our own century, specifically the ideological challenge of Marxism-Leninism and the military challenge of Germany.

There is a paradox here, with several aspects. From a historiographical viewpoint the most striking is that the revisionist consensus, which is the result of decades of immense labor by dozens of historians in many countries, appears to confirm in all important respects the verdicts of Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790)—less than a year after the fall of the Bastille, and well before the Terror—and of Alexis de Tocqueville in *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (1856). Add to this the very relevant fact that, with the notable exception of François Furet, the pioneers of revisionism have not been French but British and American, since most French historians have until recently been obliged by their political ideology to interpret the Revolution as a triumph of justice and human aspiration.

But (just to complete the paradox) it is precisely that ideology which, as Todd's remark about the *boulangers* shows, has now extended to political and social groups in France that once would have openly denounced it. What has happened in French politics in the 1970's and 1980's is that the very polarization engendered by the Revolution has itself vanished. Instead of a strictly Stalinist Communist party contesting for power with a Gaullist majority, the 1980's have seen the collapse of Communism as a political and intellectual

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factor and the emergence of an unprecedented consensus spanning socialists, liberals, and neo-Gaullists. This consensus needs an unproblematic revolution, which it will duly celebrate starting July 14.

THE French Revolution, however one looks at it, remains *the* seminal event of modern European history, the cataclysm from which all else flows. Consequently, whatever today's popular mood may be, the radical revision in historiography represents an intellectual and, I would argue, a political fact of no small moment in contemporary European and, indeed, world affairs. How did this dramatic reappraisal come about? What, precisely, was the earlier orthodoxy, and how was it overturned?

To answer those questions the best place to begin is with the events themselves. With the publication of Simon Schama's *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*,[1] we have available the most devastating, most informative, and most entertaining account, and the most penetrating critique, of the Revolution itself since Tocqueville's book of more than a century ago. *Citizens* will surely become *the* history of the French Revolution for our generation. Not only that: I warrant that Schama's book will enter the canon of permanent classics, along with the works of Burke, Michelet, Tocqueville, Lefebvre, Cobban, and Furet. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand not only what happened during the Revolution but what those events can tell us about the force of material need, the role of human will, and the power of political passions.

Schama, born in England but now a professor of history at Harvard, has accomplished the near-impossible: he has written a work based on serious, comprehensive scholarship which is yet accessible to the nonspecialist. What is even more extraordinary, he has combined a humane and thorough record of events, both known and hitherto unknown, of public and private lives, of emotions, passions, and judgments, with a profound message of his own about the Revolution; that message reflects and encapsulates the revisionist work of the past few decades without distorting the narrative or prescribing the reader's evaluation.

Schama starts by telling us that he intends to develop three themes in his book. The first is "the problematic relationship between patriotism and liberty, which, in the Revolution, turns into a brutal competition between the power of the state and the effervescence of politics." The second is the revolutionary leaders' conception of the nation as an idealized family, which induced them to view disagreement with particular policies as tantamount to a child's betrayal of his parents and therefore particularly immoral. The third is "the painful problem of revolutionary violence," concerning which "historians have erred on the side of squeamishness." All three themes belong to the realm of ideology, passion, and will: in short, to individual human choice and action—factors largely ignored or denied by the old orthodoxy.

That old orthodoxy consisted of two somewhat incompatible doctrinal ingredients: revolutionary nationalism and Marxist determinism. The former was nothing other than the fundamental belief of the Revolution itself in the nation as the sole political and moral reality, which must be freed of all divisions and hindrances in order to carry out its mission: the political redemption of mankind. This belief justified the Terror of 1792-94, which was held to be necessary to sweep away the debris of the old regime.

The father of modern revolutionary nationalism was Jules Michelet, who wrote his history of the Revolution in 1846-53 to glorify the short-lived Second Republic of 1848-51 and to keep alive revolutionary pride and memories in a time of reaction. No later French historian, not even Furet, has been able or willing wholly to shake off the domination of Michelet, for whom the revolutionaries were always right, whatever their actions, because they were defending the cause of universal freedom and justice, which only evil or ill-informed people could oppose.

Revolutionary nationalism is the basis of the universal popular appeal of the Revolution in France today. As I indicated, this has recently spread further than ever before. Twenty years ago, one could still find a small but sturdy constituency of monarchists in France, some of whom even argued for an alliance of king and wage-earners against bureaucrats and big business, denounced as "new feudalists." Today, there are few monarchists in France. In Emmanuel Todd's words: "Of course we had to guillotine the king. It's quite clear that if you say all men are equal you can't have an inherited monarchy. The king was an alien element. Everybody agrees on that; it's part of the republican tradition."

THE socialist leader Jean Jaurès introduced Marxist determinism to revolutionary studies in the 1900's, when he published a seven-volume history of the Revolution—an extraordinary achievement which, despite its ideological *parti pris*, reminds one of the level of culture that earlier generations could expect from their political leaders. For Marxists, history necessarily moves in one direction, from primitive Communism through the slave, feudal, and capitalist modes of production. At the end of this final phase, society will be universally divided into a tiny class of capitalists, who own all, and a vast

[1] Knopf, 950 pp., $29.95.

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majority of workers, who own nothing but their labor. This polarization then sets the stage for "the expropriation of the expropriators" and the arrival of true Communism, where each will work according to his ability and receive according to his needs.

For the Marxist historians who followed Jaurès, all this was not a metaphysical belief but a scientific analysis of history. In their view, the Revolution was essentially a transition from the second, the feudal, to the third, capitalist, mode of production. Norman Hampson, a liberal British historian, has paraphrased the Marxist orthodoxy in these words:

> A rising industrial and commercial middle class refused any longer to accept its subordinate status within a society and state whose values and policies reflected the obsolete demands of a decayed "feudal" order. When the French nobility took advantage of the impending bankruptcy of the crown [in 1787-88] to provoke a political crisis, in the hope of winning a conservative constitution like that of Great Britain, the middle class took charge of the movement and converted it into a social revolution. The resistance of the old order, however, was so tenacious that the "revolutionary bourgeoisie" could never have established a society based on legal equality, the sanctity of private property, and the freedom of the market if it had not enlisted [in 1791-92] the support of the sans-culottes, whose own objective was social democracy rather than liberalism. The alliance between these two divergent forces could never have been more than temporary. When it broke down, France became ungovernable by processes involving mutual consent, and Napoleon eventually restored the authority of the state, at the price of endorsing the social change brought about by the Revolution.

By the 1920's, this was the mainstream view of the French historical profession and formed the basic set of ideas underlying all empirical research. In no other democratic nation has a Marxist interpretation of the central event of the national history had such power and influence. The reason was that Marxism appeared to confirm that the Revolution, with all its drama and violence, accorded with the laws of historical development.

The "scientific" justification of revolutionary nationalism was elaborated in a series of seminal works of the 20's and 30's by Albert Mathiez and Georges Lefebvre, both of whom (like all architects of the old orthodoxy from Michelet on) worshipped Robespierre, the uncrowned king of the Jacobins and virtual dictator of France in 1793-94.

In the 1950's and 1960's, three younger historians, George Rudé, Albert Soboul, and Michel Vovelle took over and modernized the interpretative scheme established by Mathiez and Lefebvre. All three were or are Communist-party members and identify closely with the cause of Marxist-Leninist revolution throughout the world. Of the three, Rudé, who recently published what will probably be the last full statement of the old orthodoxy, is the odd man out.[2] Despite his name, he is not French but British, and was therefore faced early in his career with an academic environment where the standard view of the Revolution was diametrically opposed to the one dominant in France, and where his Communist-party membership reportedly caused him some trouble in getting a university appointment (he eventually went to work in Canada). Soboul and Vovelle, for their part, introduced into the old scheme the postwar disciplines of social history and history of *mentalités* (culture and popular attitudes), which enabled them to step away from the revolutionary events themselves to explore popular attitudes and the psychology of social groups. This turn away from politics gave the old orthodoxy a new lease on life, even as historians elsewhere were showing it to be untenable.

It is a lamentable illustration of the parochialism of historians that the attack on the Marxist interpretation, which was largely the work of Alfred Cobban and other British (and American) historians of the 1960's, did not penetrate to France until the mid-1980's. For twenty years from the mid-1960's on, virtually the sole authoritative French voice critical of the Lefebvre-Soboul orthodoxy was that of François Furet. This isolation has had the paradoxical result of leaving Furet today as France's undisputed leader among historians of the Revolution, since he is the only figure of stature with a consistent record in support of the revisionist interpretation that is now victorious.

Furet began his career in the *Annales* school with its antipolitical focus on the secular trends of large-scale economic movements, popular attitudes, and permanent or very slow-changing geographic and climatic factors. But in 1965 he published, with Denis Richet, a history of the Revolution that enraged the Marxist-Leninists, and in 1978 he committed further sacrilege in a series of essays denouncing the orthodoxy as both oppressive and misleading. Furet found the keys to a proper understanding in two thinkers whom the orthodoxy had totally spurned: Tocqueville, who saw the Revolution as a violent continuation of the centralization of power that was already occurring under the old regime, and Augustin Cochin (1876-1917), who located the causes of the Jacobin mentality in the pre-revolutionary literary and political debating clubs known as *sociétés de pensée.*

[2] *The French Revolution,* Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 224 pp., $19.95.

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By the late 1980's, Furet had emerged as the champion of what he called the conceptual, as opposed to the "commemorative," interpretation of the Revolution, which he described most recently in a lavishly illustrated history of France from 1770 to 1880.[3] In this summary of his work and reflections to date, Furet, in an elegant balancing act, manages at one and the same time to justify and preserve revolutionary nationalism as a source of pride while not in any way concealing his judgment that the Revolution of 1788-99 itself was a destructive, violent, and largely harmful episode that did little to further French democracy in the long run. Like Schama's new book, Furet's work will stand as a monument to the political interpretation of the Revolution as the result of men's will and actions, not of metaphysical forces beyond their control.

With the exception of Rudé, few Anglo-Saxon historians of the Revolution ever fully endorsed the Marxist orthodoxy. Some, like Hampson or, in an older generation, the American Robert Palmer, have accepted the basic tenet of revolutionary nationalism, namely, that radical change was both necessary and beneficial in 1789-91. Typical is Hampson's conclusion to his latest book, a study of "the Constituent Assembly and the failure of consensus" in 1789-91.[4] He points to "the almost incredible achievements of that Assembly which transformed virtually all of France's institutions and created, not merely a new society, but new ways of looking at man as a social animal and new ideas about the scope of political action. . . . France *was* transformed, in a way that many, probably most, of its educated citizens passionately believed to be for the better." Nor, in Hampson's view, was the Terror inevitable; rather, it was caused by the emergency resulting from the foreign invasion of 1792 which to those in power made extreme measures seem acceptable and even proper.

The key to Hampson's outlook is his conclusion that "it was the height of their aspirations that led men to perceive their opponents as the incarnation of evil and thereby gave the Revolution its tragic dimension. If the Assembly failed its impossible task of effecting national regeneration by consent, this was due to what was best, much more than to what was worst in it." Schama, as we shall see, shows that this benign view of the early stages of the Revolution cannot be justified. As Cochin long ago suggested, violence and terror were inseparable from the entire project of universal national regeneration according to an ideological scheme.

The actual work of undermining the Marxist orthodoxy was the achievement of Alfred Cobban. In typical British style, he demolished the premises underlying half a century of French scholarship, represented in thousands of dense pages, in a brief lecture series in 1962, later published as *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution*.[5] Cobban was able to show that the notion of a bourgeois class overthrowing a feudal class in order to promote capitalism found no support in the sources. The revolutionaries of 1789 were not capitalists, but mainly lawyers and officeholders anxious about their status in a period of economic crisis and recession. These activists, who formed the bulk of the Constituent Assembly, were "forced to destroy what was called feudalism against their will, under peasant pressure. The Revolution was also a clash of country against town, and poor against rich, and in the end proved economically retarding and a triumph for the conservative, landowning classes."

Cobban's analysis raised some very intriguing questions. Unfortunately he himself did not go beyond social and economic questions, and hence produced what Hampson has called an anti-Marxist but still essentially economic and deterministic interpretation. Neither Cobban nor the Marxists had much use for a true political or ideological interpretation, one that would emphasize the role of the Enlightenment and of the faith in rational social organization, and which would see the Revolution as primarily a political event.

This brings us back, at last, to Schama. For him the Revolution was not predestined, either in Marxist or in any other terms. Each of its stages issued, rather, from the deliberate actions and plans of leading individuals of the time. Politics and ideology, not social or economic structures, are the decisive features. Schama justifies this argument in part by his method. He begins every chapter with some characteristic anecdote, some event in an individual life, that illustrates the developing dialectic of liberty and coercion, from the institutional reforms of 1789 to the Terror of 1793-94.

What did the revolutionary leaders want? Schama argues that nationalism, more than anything else, was the ideological binding glue that held together progressive aristocrats, radical priests, and lawyers and journalists, the group that Cobban marked as the pivot of revolutionary activism. What, then, was nationalism in France of the 1780's? According to Schama, literate Frenchmen of all orders and social groups had suffered profoundly from the British victory in the Seven Years' War (known to Americans as the French and Indian War). The French defeat came as a shock to people who believed that France, by far the largest and richest country in Europe, could

[3] *La Révolution 1770-1880:* Volume 4 of *Histoire de France* by various authors, Hachette (Paris).

[4] *Prelude to Terror*, Blackwell, 200 pp., $29.95.

[5] Cambridge University Press, 1964.

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not possibly be number two in any international contest. The flip side of anti-British resentment was a growing demand that France, as it were, pull itself together, rise as a united nation, and take revenge for past insults and defeats. This burgeoning nationalism spurred the French intervention in the American Revolution; but that was not enough.

Perhaps the most original contribution of Schama's book to revolutionary studies has to do with the extent of nationalist feeling that he finds years, even decades, before 1789. As far back as the 1730's, the Marquis d'Argenson wrote a treatise on how France should be governed which accurately anticipated many of the ideas of 1789—above all, the two ideas that national glory requires unity and an end to the administrative chaos of the old regime as well as some form of national, popular representation. In the late 1750's, the Abbé Mably denounced the existing structures of government and administration as archaic and inappropriate, and recommended a system of popular representation to sweep away the irrational debris of centuries and to establish true national government. With uncanny foresight, he predicted that such a radical transformation of government could only occur after a period of "spiritual ferment" that might well result in violence and civil war.

One aspect that Schama does not emphasize enough, in my opinion, is the role of religion in the rise of French nationalism. French Catholicism had always had a strongly separatist tinge. In the Middle Ages, French kings repeatedly refused to bow to the Pope's jurisdiction in ecclesiastical affairs. During one of these controversies, Philip the Fair in 1303 even went so far as to have Pope Boniface VIII arrested, in a curious anticipation of what the revolutionary government did to Pius VI in 1797. In later centuries, this belief in a special status for the French Church became known as "Gallicanism," which the Popes resented without being able to do much about it.

In the 17th century, Gallicanism received a powerful boost from Jansenism, the puritan movement which condemned the morals and the intellectual repression of the institutional Church. By the mid-18th century Jansenism had become part of the belief of many French Catholics that they were somehow special, and superior to the general run of their co-religionists. This emerging religious nationalism fed into and strengthened the political nationalism that Schama detects after 1763.

In the 1780's, the nationalists found a further cause of urgency in the lamentable economic situation of the government. By late 1786, the French state was bankrupt. The nationalist or, to use the contemporary phrase, the *patriotic* solution to the problem was to establish a national representative body that would reform the administration and replace royal absolutism with popular sovereignty. By late 1788, the king, Louis XVI, had been persuaded to summon the only representative bodies known in French tradition, namely, the Estates General, which had last met in 1614.

No sooner had the Estates been convened in early 1789 than the Third Estate, representing the commoners, declared itself the embodiment of the national will and changed its name to the National Assembly. The Assembly invited progressive nobles and clergymen to join it, and proceeded, in a series of measures in 1789-90, to abolish all inherited social and economic rights and privileges, to disestablish the Church, and to introduce civil and political rights for all citizens.

So far, so good. Schama points out, however, that the prestige and power of the Assembly depended not merely on rational consent but on a fateful change in the patriotic ideology that inspired its leaders, a change that he argues was inherent in its universalist logic. The patriots wanted total change and they wanted it immediately. As Edmund Burke clearly saw in 1790, this was a grotesque, even inhuman, demand, since it implied the wholesale destruction of all traditions, whether good or bad. Moreover, the patriot lawmakers were a small minority of intellectual activists in an overwhelmingly agrarian country, most of whose inhabitants wanted simply a solution to the serious economic crisis. The harvest of 1788 had failed, the price of bread skyrocketed; hunger and misery were widespread in the spring of 1789. This was the immediate cause of the storming of the Bastille on July 14, which dramatically illustrated what could be done with half-armed Parisian mobs, a lesson not lost on the more radical activists.

Schama argues that even as early as 1788 it was clear that the patriot program was going to lead to bloodshed, violence, and civil war. The reason was that the very absolutism of the ideologues of national regeneration necessarily led them to regard any and all opponents as unpatriotic and therefore as "enemies of the people":

> Once *aristocrat* became synonymous with *anti-national,* it meant that anyone who wished to preserve distinctions of rank in the political bodies of the new order identified himself as incapable of citizenship. Such people were, in effect, outside the Nation, foreigners even before they had emigrated.

According to Schama, the "sentimental panaceas" of patriotic rhetoric led to violent conflict because they created entirely unrealistic expectations while at the same time labeling all opponents as vicious, immoral enemies who, for narrow, egotistical reasons, were preventing universal

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happiness. The ideologues told the nation that the Assembly would, by some magical process, solve all problems and grievances. When this did not happen, the activists found enough support in marginal groups threatened by economic disaster to provide the physical means of civil war—a moralistic civil war, to be sure, fought on behalf of the People against its enemies.

The phrase "sentimental panaceas" raises the question of the revolutionary temperament, the outlook of those who could believe that destroying all existing institutions to create a perfect new political society was either possible or desirable. Schama is not alone in pointing to Jean-Jacques Rousseau as the ancestor of this particular form of sentimental terrorism. Certainly, as Schama is careful to note, Rousseau himself warned that instituting a republic of "virtue"—a key revolutionary term—in a great, existing state was to invite disaster. In 1789, however, Rousseau had been dead for eleven years and the point was not what he had actually said but his prestige among radical intellectuals. Their rhetoric, as Schama notes, was "Rousseau with a hoarse voice and sharpened with bloody-minded impatience." From this crude version of Rousseau the intellectuals devised the notion that virtue (*vertu*) could and must be institutionalized, and that doing so would bring about national regeneration.

Schama shows that the "direct relationship between blood and freedom" (in the ideologues' sense) was clear, not, as Hampson would have it, in 1793, but already in 1789. "From the first year it was apparent that violence was not just an unfortunate side-effect from which enlightened Patriots could selectively avert their eyes; it was the Revolution's source of collective energy. It was what made the Revolution revolutionary."

IT WOULD be hard to imagine a more direct challenge either to the Marxist orthodoxy of collective factors operating beyond human will or to Hampson's benevolent liberalism. Yet Schama carries it off, above all by his extensive and cogent quotations from major or minor actors of the drama. His thousand pages are not a political tract or an argument with rival interpretations; he has no time for that, so concerned is he to report what people actually did and said. Nevertheless the fundamental message is clear. The Revolution, so far from producing liberty and democracy, was fated by its fundamental ideology to produce confrontation and civil war. Since, given human nature, the project of total renewal could not be carried out, it led necessarily to intolerance and repression of a particularly vicious kind, in which opponents were not merely adversaries to be convinced or restrained, but evil forces to be eradicated.

In a critique of Schama's book, Hampson has argued that Schama ignores the ideology of the revolutionaries. This is hardly the case, as I have indicated; Schama makes that ideology clear in ways that few, except for Tocqueville, have done. But two other critical points are more relevant. One is that Schama spends so much time describing and analyzing the pre-revolution of 1774-89 that, despite his thousand pages, he has too little space for the period from the end of the Constituent Assembly in late 1791 to the fall of Robespierre and the end of the Jacobin Terror in 1794. A second is that Schama offers so much that an unprepared reader may indeed miss the forest for the trees. What we need to complement Schama is a bare-bones history of the revolutionary events combined with a philosophical interpretation, something like a French equivalent of Martin Malia's extraordinary little volume on the Russian Revolution.[6] In barely 100 pages, Malia shows what made the Russian Revolution inevitable, what happened during it, and why its results were as they are.

Applying Malia's method to France, one can immediately see certain striking analogies to the Russian case as well as equally important differences. The biggest difference is that, however bloody the Jacobin Terror, it came nowhere near destroying French civil society as the Bolsheviks, aided by the famine they caused, destroyed Russian civil society in 1918-21. France survived, recovered, and eventually found its way to a democratic system that honors the revolutionary tradition while in fact having very little in common with the revolutionary ideology.

The analogies may be more important. Both revolutions had absolute goals, which naturally entailed the absolute eradication of the enemies, real or imagined, of these goals. Both saw in national uniformity the key to power and survival. For both, foreign war and expansion were a necessary complement to national, domestic revolution. Both, in accordance with this doctrine, brought untold and entirely unnecessary misery to millions of Europeans, as well as inflicting terrible damage on their homelands. Both, finally, were, as Schama notes in the French case, "antimodernizing"; they retarded rather than accelerated the movement of their respective political cultures toward democratic pluralism, tolerance, and government by genuine popular sovereignty.

THE Marxists, of course, long ago decided on the answer to the question of whether the Revolution was modernizing, and how. Cobban proved them wrong but had no positive scheme of his own to put in the Marxist place, since he still believed in a social, not a political, explanation. A few years after Cobban wrote his debunking book, an American historian, Edward Whiting Fox, came up with a general

[6] *Comprendre la révolution russe*, Seuil (Paris), 1980.

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interpretation of French history that, combined with Cobban, may offer some interesting pointers to what happened during the Revolution.[7] Curiously, Schama neglects this work, though it provides useful support for his thesis that the Revolution was "anti-modernizing."

Fox believes that French history can be interpreted as a secular struggle between what he calls "areal" and "linear" forms of organization. The areal is the organization of the territorial state, based on control, direct or indirect, of land. Linear organization is the network of commercial and financial interest which, in 18th-century France, spanned the Atlantic seaboard from Bordeaux in the south to Calais in the north, and the Rhine and Rhone valleys. The champions of areal organization and of the territorial state were by definition conservative, seeking to include and control the commercial cities in order to tax and exploit them. The merchants and financiers of the linear system, on the other hand, were by definition liberal, interested in withdrawing as much as possible from areal control and in resisting the encroachments of the state.

Ironically, a Marxist would find it very easy to apply Fox's scheme to the Revolution. What happened, he would say, was that the linear people rose against the encrusted stagnation of the areal system, thus producing 19th-century French capitalism. The only problem with this neat solution is that we know, thanks to Cobban, that it is the exact reverse of the truth: the Revolution was in fact a tremendous victory for the arealists and a complete defeat for the linear, commercial culture. Cobban, and after him many others, have noted that French commerce was ruined by the Revolution and the wars that followed. French foreign trade in 1815 was a fraction of what it had been in 1789; Bordeaux, Brest, Le Havre, Calais, Strasbourg, and the other trading cities were shells of their former selves. The question one must ask is: was this ruination deliberate, and if so, why was it done?

Schama and Cobban together can provide the answer. As I indicated above, Cobban points out that the revolutionary leaders were radical lawyers and officeholders fearful of losing status. So they climbed on board a rising wave of nationalist ideology which they then used to launch an unprecedented centralization of authority and coercive force. What do the radical measures of 1789—the abolition of the orders, of feudal privileges, of the established Church, of inherited distinctions—all mean? If we peel away the patriotic varnish that Hampson and other liberals are so concerned to refresh, what they mean is a demolition of all traditional, local political cultures, and of all other institutional and psychological obstacles to uniform national power, centrally located in the Assembly and, later, the Convention.

This is what Tocqueville clearly saw in the 1850's. He did not see what more recent histories can tell us, namely, that this centralization was not only brutal and violent, but viciously regressive from the viewpoint of economic and political modernization. Thanks exclusively to the activity of the patriots—or should we call them arealists?—Frenchmen in general were vastly poorer and arguably less free in 1793 than they had been in 1788.

THIS Cobban-Fox-Schama interpretation carries some powerful lessons for today. One is that it is naive to think that commercial capitalism, just because it produces economic growth, is politically destined to defeat areal power on a national or global scale. Many people today believe, not only that the cold war between Western democracy and Communist totalitarianism is over, but that Western-style liberal capitalism is necessarily the coming thing. Certainly it would be pleasant if that were the case, but the French Revolution shows that determined arealists are closer to the levers of power, and that they will not hesitate to use them.

This consideration seems to me to have no small relevance for how we evaluate the modern fate of the Russian Revolution as symbolized in the efforts of Mikhail Gorbachev to reform the Soviet Union. The Russian revolutionaries were, in Fox's term, arealists. In their ideology there was no place for capitalist development, which they accordingly proceeded to crush so effectively in Russia that many parts of that vast country are materially worse off today than they were in 1913. Now Gorbachev's strategy appears to be one of reinforcing areal control of the Soviet Union. In carrying out that strategy, he will not be impressed by arguments that linear capitalism is the wave of the future. Real history has no place for such a determinism, which is merely the mirror image of Marxism. Linear-style capitalist organization can win if it is backed by more resolution and a stronger will than its enemies. If not, it loses. So it was in 1789, and so it is in 1989.

One riddle perhaps remains. How could the Enlightenment ideals of liberal progress, toleration, and individual rights become the justification of mass murder and repression in the name of the People and *vertu*? After reading Schama, one realizes that this is not a riddle at all. Nothing is easier than perverting an ideal into the tool of repressive power while retaining the original slogans. Surely the history of Soviet Communism has taught us that. If we need examples closer to home, we need look merely at the striking transformation in the meaning of liberalism in the United States over the past two-and-a-half decades.

[7] *History in Geographic Perspective*, Norton, 1971 (available in paperback).

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At the time of the original Civil Rights Act of 1964, equal rights meant equal rights, not equality of result. Nevertheless, today's administrators, lawyers, and bureaucrats have no trouble interpreting earlier doctrines according to an entirely different agenda, one of increasing regulation and control in the name of group rights.

These lawyers and bureaucrats, members of what some sociologists have called the "New Class," are the social and intellectual analogues of the French activists of 1789. This is not, of course, to say that they have hidden plans for a Jacobin Terror to eradicate capitalism and political liberty in America. It is, however, to say that in this country we have a conflict of political cultures wherein the forces of regulation have managed to seize the moral and ideological high ground in ways not wholly dissimilar to the methods of the *patriotes* vis-à-vis well-meaning liberals in 1789-91. The leaders of these forces in America are using our contemporary sans-culottes—the radicalized leadership of the urban minorities—as battering rams in their strategy of control, offering them power and jobs in return for loyalty and support. The results of this strategy are already evident in our stagnating economic productivity, the catastrophic condition of our schools, the lack of standards and professionalism in higher education, and in the growing calls for government policies in a variety of areas formerly considered to lie within the domain of individual responsibility.

If Schama's magnificent book teaches us anything, it is that people suffer when individuals with power and responsibility let their political fantasies get the better of their understanding of reality. Robespierre was a liberal in 1789 and a terrorist for *vertu* in 1794. But Schama may also inspire us to hope that such a process is not inevitable. The experience of mankind since 1789 directs us to value democratic institutions where they exist, and to fear those who would have us reject or undermine them in the name of a more "just" or "equitable" distribution of resources or of power.

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Public Opinion and the Jogger

Richard Brookhiser

THE New York *Times* is not the paper of record on crime. In the division of labor that controls newspaper reporting in New York City, the three tabloids—the *Daily News*, the *Post*, and *Newsday*—cover local crime. The *Times* covers Nagorno-Karabakh.

When a crime is particularly heinous or unusual, however, the *Times* will bring the weight of its attention to bear upon it. The coverage the *Times* devotes to a story can be factually useful; its treatment of the case of Tawana Brawley was notably thorough and revealing. More important is the role of the *Times* in expressing the public opinion of the event.

Public opinion, at least as it appears in the *Times*, should not be confused with popular sentiment. (We owe this distinction to John Lukacs.) Popular sentiment is what everyone thinks. Public opinion is what everyone thinks he ought to think. Popular sentiment is what people say to one another around their dinner tables. Public opinion is what they say to callers from polling organizations. The two may overlap, of course. But it is ever the intention of responsible people—and the *Times* is nothing if not responsible—to transmute the base metal of the one into the good coin of the other.

In Trollope novels, the *Times* of London, disguised as the *Thunderer*, creates public opinion by fiat. The *Times* of New York has no such power. The opinion that appears in its pages is the result of the interplay of several factors, of which the *Times*'s editorials and op-ed pieces are perhaps the least important. Public opinion in the *Times* also reflects the questions its reporters choose to explore, and the people to whom they turn for answers; the way the resulting stories are played; and, finally, the reactions of public figures, who have been influenced by past currents of public opinion.

ON THE NIGHT of April 19, 1989 a twenty-eight-year-old investment banker was attacked as she jogged along the 102nd Street Transverse in northern Central Park. Her attackers slashed her, beat her with a rock and a pipe, raped her, and left her in a puddle where she was found, three-and-a-half hours later, bound and gagged and nearly naked. She was not the only crime victim in the northern part of the park that night: eight other people, men and women, were harassed or assaulted. A male jogger who was struck on the head with a pipe—evidently the same one used to batter the young woman—had to be hospitalized.

The crime spree was the work of a band of teenagers of shifting size. The police arrested five that night as they were leaving the park. Over the next few days, more arrests were made until the police held eight suspects (later reduced to six) for the rape. The oldest was seventeen. The youngest was fourteen.

In the weeks that followed, most of the *Times*'s coverage was devoted to the unfolding details: accounts of how the alleged attackers had assembled, and what exactly they had done; bulletins on the condition of the victim; profiles of her, and of the suspects; the preliminary charges of the assistant district attorney, and the rebuttals of the defense lawyers; a piece on the ethos of late-night joggers. There was even speculation on how the crime might affect the mayoral race—Mayor Koch is perceived as being tough on crime, but Rudolph Giuliani, his likely Republican opponent, is a former prosecutor. Early on, a new word was added to the vocabulary of *Times* readers: "wilding" (pronounced, the *Times* noted, with a silent "d"). But all along, as befits an organ of public opinion, the *Times* also sought to explain—to put the grotesque and monstrous incident in some context.

The victim was easily explained. We learned, it seemed, everything about her except her name—the *Times* and the other dailies withheld it, on the grounds that she was a rape victim, and still alive—and everything we learned about her was impressive. She had graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Wellesley, where the lowest grade she ever got was A—. While there, she had worked at a shelter for battered women in Boston, and spent a summer as a congressional intern. After graduation, she did another internship, for the State Department in Zimbabwe. A graduate degree from the Yale School of Management led to a job at Salomon Brothers, where her work was described as "top-notch." She also loved running—"she was really obsessed by running," a former colleague said. She was, in short, smart and able, and also had, as the *Times* profile put it, "warmth and compassion." By herself, she supplied half of a ready-made tale of two cities—a combination of success and virtue, far more attractive than Tom Wolfe's weak and egotistical Sherman McCoy in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, who was also brought low by the city's underside.

The suspects were a different matter. When the *Times* turned to them, the story line—all story lines—broke apart. Public opinion was baffled.

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The problem was motive, or lack of it. There were no underlying causes of the sort beloved by sociologists. There were not even plausible personal motives of the kind sought by the police. Greed had to be discounted, since only two of the victims were actually robbed (one of them lost a sandwich). Drugs, the all-purpose urban bogeyman, also did not seem to be a factor. From what Chief of Detectives Robert Colangelo was reported as saying, the suspects—at least those arrested on the spot—had been clean and sober at the time of the crime. Nothing in the profiles the *Times* pieced together later mentioned drug-selling or drug use.

WHAT about the "underclass"? The "underclass" is a term so vague it is almost circular: a person is defined as a member of the underclass because of his compulsive performance of the kind of behavior that keeps people . . . in the underclass. But the word is not, in fact, content-free. Not all poor people belong to the underclass, but everyone in the underclass is poor. If the young woman's attackers did not want her money, might they at least have been inflamed by the fact that she had money, and they didn't? On April 25, in the middle of a story about "the apparently motiveless rampage," the *Times* tentatively floated such a notion.

"For many psychologists," the *Times* reporter wrote, "the idea of attacking people who seem to personify a level of unattainable affluence is a common pattern among participants in wolf-pack attacks." The *Times* then turned to an expert, Dr. Leah Blumberg Lapidus, a psychologist at Columbia, who suggested that "joggers may represent a level of socioeconomic attainment that the media have convinced everybody is necessary to have in order to be an acceptable person. . . . So, to that extent, such people become a target."

The next day, however, the *Times* undercut the underclass argument simply by printing profiles of the eight suspects. "Some were the children of broken homes," the *Times* began cautiously, "and certainly all bore daily witness to the abounding pathology of drugs, drink, and poverty. But four lived in a building with a doorman, and one went to a parochial school. One received an allowance of $4 a day from his father. . . ." The "building with a doorman" was Schomburg Plaza, a moderate- to middle-income high-rise complex at the northeast corner of Central Park—not Park Avenue swank, but not desolation, either. "This is not a community, people here say," the *Times* noted in a separate story a week later on the Schomburg Plaza's neighborhood, "that should be branded with the images of poverty, fear, and despair. . . . According to police and census data, the neighborhood is not plagued either by sky-high crime rates or wrenching poverty."

Other stigmata of the underclass were also missing. The father of one of the original suspects was described as a neighborhood role model who coached a baseball team that had competed in a tournament in Puerto Rico; his son played third base. Another suspect's mother was a born-again Christian who had been in church the night of the assaults. One teenager played drums in a church choir. The teenager who attended a Catholic school had also been enrolled in the Big Brother program. Two of the suspects' parents, the *Times* reported, set curfews for their children. Only one of the suspects—the drummer—had any criminal record. These were not abandoned children. Their parents worked hard to keep them out of trouble. The *Times* headlined the piece: "Park Suspects: Children of Discipline."

THE one motive the *Times* was relieved not to find was race. For the first three days of its coverage, the *Times* did not mention race. The first five teenagers to be arrested were described as living in "northern Manhattan," rather than in Harlem. When the *Times* dropped the race taboo, it was in a story about black fears of a white backlash. That same day—the fourth of its coverage—the paper ran another story speculating that some of the Central Park suspects may have been involved in an earlier rampage on April 15, which had victimized East Harlem (not "northern Manhattan").

To a degree, the *Times* was taking its cues from the police. In the beginning, when the police saw no racial angle, the *Times* reported that. When, after five days, the police said they were looking at the racial angle, the *Times*, warily, reported that too. "The question of whether this was a series of bias-related incidents is being looked at very closely," the *Times* quoted Deputy Commissioner Alice T. McGillion, in the same story that picked the brains of Dr. Lapidus. Evidence of "bias," the *Times* went on, included "testimony from victims" of the crime spree—testimony to what? racial abuse? the *Times* did not elaborate—and a statement by one of the rape suspects that another member of the group had suggested that they "get a white girl."

The *Times* then performed the evidently distasteful task of listing the races of the people involved. The rape victim: white. The teenagers accused of assailing her: black. The eight other victims of the night's wilding: five white, two Hispanic, and one black "who was briefly harassed until one youth shouted that he knew the man." The following day, the *Times* let the racial explanation go again. One of the suspects' lawyers, the *Times* reported, denied that any "get a white" remark had been made. The story went on to quote "police officials and other authorities familiar with what some call wolf-pack crimes" as saying that "the phenomenon cuts across all racial and ethnic lines, and that, statistically, blacks tend to outnumber whites as victims in such attacks." "The question," the *Times* pronounced editorially the same day, "demands more than the quick reassurance of a label."

Some public figures found reassurance in other labels. Reverend Herbert Daughtry, a black minister, declared that this was a "violent society," which we were "all guilty" of creating. Rabbi Balfour Brickner, a liberal rabbi, fingered economic disparity between racial

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groups as the cause of urban crime. One commentator in a major paper, Pete Hamill of the New York *Post*, blamed Washington directly: "For twenty years, conservatives have run the federal government and we are living with the consequences of their policies."

But public officials shared the *Times*'s agnosticism—an indication of how well the *Times* was performing its opinion-expressing role. "You name me one social reason you can give to explain it," demanded an angry Mayor Koch at a press conference. Later, he called the attackers "an aberrant group that would have assaulted anyone in their way." The wilding mob, offered Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, was looking for "targets of opportunity. . . . it looks as though they picked their victims at random and that there was no other reason for the attacks."

THE *Times* made a last effort to find the slow reassurance of an explanation two weeks after the crime occurred. The effort was double-barreled. A *Times* book and TV critic asked experts about the possible role of television in stimulating the crime and found a confusion of tongues. One professor of communications felt that blaming the medium was "far-fetched." Another blamed commercials for encouraging "a psychopathic world view" and "class-based anger." A third attacked television not for inciting the crime, but for the way it had covered it afterward, which had "play[ed] on the fears of the white middle class." "Television," the *Times* critic concluded wearily, "as usual, is guilty, only no one can say for certain of what."

The bigger story that day mustered four macro-level theories, all buttressed by experts, under the headline "Grim Seeds of Park Rampage Found in East Harlem Streets." Two of these theories implicated crack. Since the drug was not involved directly, its influence had to be traced indirectly. The key verb was *permeate*: "Crack permeates East Harlem." This permeation had led to "an extraordinary resurgence of violence," according to Philippe Bourgois, an anthropologist living in East Harlem, since "to be successful in the underground economy, you have to be ruthless." Crack also distorted the roles of adults and kids. "In the community as a whole," said Ansley Hamid, another East Harlem-based anthropologist, "there is a prominence that youth have on account of their control of this important commodity."

The third theory looked to gangs, or posses. The problem with New York City posses, it seems, is that they are not structured enough. Joan Moore, a sociologist at the University of Wisconsin, was cited as a student of Chicano gangs in Los Angeles, where apparently they do it better. In a "more goal-oriented gang," the *Times* paraphrased her, leaders can rein in the "most frenzied" members.

The last theory was a recycling of underclass resentment. William Kornblum, an academic at the City University of New York, said his "research has found that East Harlem ranks higher than any other neighborhood in the United States on indicators of the underclass." (The reporter of this story and the reporter of the story on the Schomburg Plaza should have gotten together.) Meanwhile, the Upper East Side, only blocks away, "represents the greatest concentration of wealth that we have found anywhere in the United States."

These theories were offered as explanations of the crime, but they did not explain it away. This, at least, seemed to be the feeling of the residents of East Harlem, as reported by the two anthropologists who had come to study them. "Everyone condemns it," the *Times* quoted Bourgois. "Everyone is disgusted," Hamid agreed. Nor was the *Times* swept away by its own results. It put the "Grim Seeds" story in the third section of the newspaper, the "Science Times." Two days later, its second editorial on the subject repeated that "those arrested evidently did not act out of racial hostility, involvement with drugs, or economic deprivation." The *Times*'s last characterization of the crime was "random brutality." Public opinion had drawn a blank.

THE most important reason for public opinion's agnostic reaction to the Central Park rape may be a weariness with distractions. Tom Wicker's op-ed column, "The Worst Fear," on the eighth day of the *Times*'s coverage, was a notable expression of that weariness. "None of the usual suspects," he wrote early on, "can be rounded up," after which he made the by-now ritual dismissal of drugs, race, and the underclass, though he could not let it go at that: "The attackers lived surrounded and surely influenced by the social pathologies of the inner city. . . . These influences are bound to have had some consequences." But there was a second "but." "The bleak existence of the inner city does not finally explain this crime. Nothing does. . . ." That was the "worst fear" of his title, that the crime was "inexplicable."

In the effort to discover why crimes happen, we risk losing the ability and the will to deal properly with the principals after the crimes have occurred. Therefore if public opinion is finally growing weary of explanations—not just in this case but in general—something good may yet come out of the Central Park evil.

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Still Taking the Fifth

David Horowitz

More than a decade ago, when I was already in my late thirties, I received a visit in California from an elderly woman whom I shall call Emily, the mother of my best childhood friend. She had come to confess her complicity in a crime committed long ago.

Like my own parents, Emily had been a member of the Communist party. Like my parents, too, she had been part of a colony of Jewish Communists who in the early 40's had settled in a neighborhood of working-class Catholics in Queens, New York. People in this colony lived two lives. Outwardly they were middle-class: scrupulous in their respect for the mores of the community and unfailing in their obedience to its civil laws. Politically they identified themselves as "progressives," espousing views that were superficially liberal and democratic. They represented themselves (and were perceived by others) as "socially conscious" and "idealistic," and they were active in trade unions and civil-rights groups and in the "progressive wing" of the Democratic party.

In fact, however, Emily and my parents also inhabited another world as secret soldiers in the Third International founded by Lenin. In their eyes, a sixth of humanity had triumphantly entered an entirely new stage of history in Soviet Russia in 1917, and that achievement would soon be extended all over the globe by the actions of the loyal Communist vanguard which they had joined. The arena of liberal and progressive politics may have been the "address" by which they were known to outsiders, but their membership in this revolutionary army was the thing that really mattered to Emily and my parents and to all their political friends.

Indeed, in their own minds Emily and my parents were secret agents. On joining the Communist party, they had even been given secret names against the time when their true objective might require them to abandon the liberal façade and go "underground" in the revolutionary struggle. All their legitimate political activities were merely preparations or fronts for the tasks ahead, which they could discuss only with other secret agents like themselves. Their purpose in pursuing such legitimate activities was not to advance liberal or democratic values but to serve the interests of the Soviet Union, the place where the future had already begun to happen.

For those in the party, the revolutionary role was not the fantasy it seems in retrospect—a kitsch fantasy, at that—but something very real. The story Emily told me proves this. Emily had been a high-school teacher of foreign languages. Her only flirtation with life beyond the prudent bounds of the middle class was, in fact, her membership in the Communist party. But even her party life—despite its little Bolshevik rituals and conspiratorial overtones—was organized around quite unextraordinary activities: raising funds for volunteers during the Spanish Civil War, marching for civil rights, playing the part of a loyal cadre in the New York City Teachers Union (which the party controlled).

Then in 1940, Emily, who had just become a new mother, was singled out for a special mission whose purpose could not be revealed, even to her. Because it was the party that had made the request, any fear she felt at the prospect of danger only heightened her sense of honor at having been selected. She understood instinctively that the very unobtrusiveness and insignificance of her life made her suitable for the important task ahead. It was the party that spoke, but it was History that called.

Emily agreed to undertake the special mission. She left her infant son with her husband in New York, and flew to Mexico where she delivered a sealed envelope to a contact the party had designated. Then she flew back to New York and resumed her normal life. It was as simple as that—yet, as Emily soon discovered, she had become a small but decisive link in the chain by which Joseph Stalin reached out from Moscow to Coyoacán, Mexico, to put an ice pick in the head of Leon Trotsky.

It seems to me now that one of the most disturbing elements in Emily's story was that she had waited so long to tell it, and then only to me, privately, twenty years after Khrushchev's speech acknowledging the crimes of Stalin (which was about the time that she and my parents left the Communist party). Neither she nor my parents would ever have thought to tell me such a story when as a young man I was starting on my own career in the Left. They certainly never told their stories publicly. And the reason is that, like thousands of others, they had left the party but could not leave the faith.

Al Bernstein, the father of the journalist Carl Bernstein of Watergate fame, is one of those thousands. When approached by his son about a book the latter intended to write on "the witch-hunts leading up to the McCarthy era"—the book (or rather a variant of it) that has now been published under the title *Loyalties**—Al Bernstein refused to be interviewed. He did not approve his son's quest for the truth about his experience in the Communist party, or about the party's role in American life:

"I think your focus on the party is cockeyed. You're up the wrong

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tree. The right tree is what people did. . . .

"I worry about your premise. The *right* premise, the premise of a lot of recent books about the period, is that people were persecuted because of what they did, not because of their affiliation. Because once you admit affiliation you get into all that Stalinist crap. . . ."

Indeed, not to accept the "right" premise was, in Al Bernstein's view, not only politically incorrect, it was also—as he explained to Carl—dangerous:

"The premise people eventually accepted after the McCarthy period was that the victims weren't Communists. If you're going to write a book that says McCarthy was right, that a lot of us were Communists, you're going to write a dangerous book. . . . You're going to prove McCarthy right, because all he was saying was that the system was loaded with Communists. And he was right."

According to Al Bernstein, the fact that virtually all of McCarthy's victims were Communists and that they lied about it by posing as liberals had nothing to do with their having been singled out for "oppression":

"Was I 'oppressed' because I was a Communist? . . . No. It was incidental. I was 'oppressed' because I was affiliated with a left-wing union."

Thus the father's catechism.

IN PLAIN TRUTH, however, Al Bernstein *was* a Communist. He was not merely "affiliated with" the United Public Workers of America; he was a leader of that union. Nor was the UPWA merely a "left-wing union"; it was a union under Communist-party control. And this meant that the UPWA was entirely different from a union not under Communist control.

That difference was manifested most dramatically in 1948, after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, when the Truman administration announced the launching of the Marshall Plan—an economic aid program to revive the war-shattered economies of Western Europe and to shore up its democracies against the threat of internal Communist subversion. Most American unions, left-wing and otherwise, supported the Marshall Plan, as a necessary defense measure for the West and as an economic boon for their members. Al Bernstein's union did not. Along with all other Communist-controlled unions in the U.S., United Public Workers attacked the Marshall Plan as a "cold-war" plot and campaigned vigorously against it. And in the arena of national politics, Al Bernstein and his comrades bolted the Democratic party and helped organize the Progressive-party candidacy of Henry Wallace in the hope of unseating Truman and ending his program of resistance to Soviet expansion.

It was because of this campaign to support the Soviet offensive in Eastern Europe that Al Bernstein's union (like other Communist-controlled unions) was expelled from the CIO—not by McCarthy or by Truman and his Loyalty Board, but by labor leaders like Philip Murray and Walter Reuther, democratic socialists in whose eyes the Stalinists had betrayed the unions under their control to the interests of the Soviet Union. Thus Philip Murray (praised in passing by Carl Bernstein himself in *Loyalties* for his principled opposition to the Loyalty Boards) told the CIO convention in 1948 that the Communists "have subverted every decent movement into which they have infiltrated themselves in the course of their unholy career."

Yet today, more than three decades after Senator McCarthy's death, Al Bernstein is still refusing to countenance any inquiry, however innocent, into his commitments and beliefs, still hiding his Communist principles behind a liberal façade. And he is doing this not only as far as the world at large is concerned but to his own, rather pathetically inquisitive son. To be called a witch-hunter by your father while only trying, however ineffectually, to sort out the oedipal tangle must be a daunting experience. So daunting, in the event, that Carl ends by withdrawing from the struggle altogether: "It is my father for whom I write, whose judgment I most respect, whose approval I still seek."

THE sheer desperation of Carl Bernstein's filial hunger perhaps helps to explain the deficiencies of this book. Having started out to write about "the witch-hunts leading up to the McCarthy era," and having failed after more than ten years to execute his original plan, Carl Bernstein finally produced a sketchy little memoir that neither provides a vivid portrait of the Communist milieu in which he grew up nor illuminates the general issue he is supposedly trying to explore. For while at the outset Carl manfully resists his father's "premise," by the concluding chapters of *Loyalties* he has capitulated to it. Al Bernstein's Communist-party loyalties, Carl finally avows, did *not* matter, either to him or to those who pursued him; he and all the other agents of the Communist cause were targeted solely for their activities in behalf of trade unionism and civil rights; and the internal-security program of the Truman administration, which supposedly was aimed at Communists, "really was a war against liberals."

Yet not even this capitulation has satisfied some of Bernstein's critics on the Left, who have rapped his literary knuckles for not going *far enough* in justifying his parent's politics. As Martin Duberman complains in the Washington *Post*'s *Book World*:

In his dedication, Carl Bernstein asserts that he is "proud of the choices" his parents made. But he never provides enough argued detail about what went into those choices to allow most Americans to join him—as surely they should—in his approbation.

But should they? To do so would mean accepting two tenets of faith. The first is that Communists were all peace-loving, civil-rights activists and American patriots. Yet there is a vast literature on American Communism (of which Bernstein is utterly innocent) that re-

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futes this idea a thousand times over, as does the historical experience and testimony of scores of anti-Communist leftists like Philip Murray and Walter Reuther.

Not only were Communists not great believers in civil liberties, they were notorious masters of the political blacklist in all the organizations they managed to dominate. It was partly for this reason that when the loyalty boards and congressional committees finally did go to work in the late 40's, they found many people—many liberals—waiting to settle scores with the Communists. These were people whose own organizations had been infiltrated and manipulated and subverted for hidden agendas, and who had personally been slandered, libeled, and otherwise punished for opposing the party line.

THE second tenet Duberman wants everyone to accept is that Communists were the innocent victims of American fascism. On this point, Duberman is decidedly unfair to Carl Bernstein, who has the litany down pat:

> *"It was a reign of terror."*
>
> I have never heard my father talk like that, have never known him to reach for a cliché. But this was no cliché.

True, the "reign of terror" is not a cliché; it is a lie. My own mother, for example, rather than answer questions about her membership in the party, elected to take an early "disability" retirement from the New York City school system. With the help of party friends and liberal sympathizers she immediately went on to other, more lucrative careers. Carl Bernstein's father, having been a party lawyer, became a small-time businessman, and in supposedly terrorized America, he was still able to make use of his personal connections to get his son a job as a reporter at the Washington *Star*.

MANY years later, to that same son, who went on to achieve fame and fortune for his role in toppling a President of the United States, Al Bernstein declares: "If you're going to write a book that says McCarthy was right, that a lot of us were Communists, you're going to write a dangerous book." Why dangerous? Is not McCarthy himself the most unresurrectable political corpse of the McCarthy era, and does not Al Bernstein know this? Of course he does. Al Bernstein means that such a book would be dangerous not because it might bring persecution, but because telling the truth might finally penetrate the veil still protecting lives that were spent in service to totalitarianism:

> "Look," he snapped, "you've read Lillian Hellman's book [*Scoundrel Time*]. She skirts these questions [about Communist party membership] very neatly. She's too sharp to leave herself open to that kind of embarrassment."

As always, Al Bernstein reveals a sharper judgment than that of his son. The danger is not that of a sham terror but of *embarrassment*, embarrassment over a moral and political guilt that is real. Once Carl Bernstein decided that he had to spare his father that embarrassment, he lost any chance he might have had to write a decent book and instead doomed himself to producing a craven and incoherent contribution to one of the most insidious myths of our time.

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A Major Israeli Novel

Alan Mintz

DURING the first fifteen years following World War II, the Holocaust did not figure as a major theme in serious works of Israeli literary art. (The great exception lay in the epic poetry of Uri Zvi Greenberg.) This absence, however, is not as surprising as it might appear. The young writers belonging to the group often called the Palmakh Generation were thrust to the forefront on the strength of the voice they gave to the War of Independence and the establishment of the new state. It was, indeed, in the death and sacrifice that accompanied the struggle for new national life that they located *their* response to the destruction of European Jewry. But their silence also bespoke a deep sense of shame over the spectacle of Jews going to death "like sheep to the slaughter," and, because of their socialist-Zionist training, a lack of connection to the Jews of the Diaspora.

This disengagement was later jarred by the Eichmann trial, and a number of writers belonging to the Palmakh Generation—Hayim Gouri, Hanoch Bartov, Yehuda Amichai, Yoram Kaniuk—went on to write interesting works which grappled with the Holocaust, or at least with the unsettling challenges it presented to their identities. In the 60's and 70's younger writers like Amos Oz and A.B. Yehoshua submitted the mystique of Israeli heroism to a withering critique, but the Holocaust still remained peripheral to their writing. For a serious engagement of these issues one has to look to the work not of Israeli-born writers but of a small group of survivors: the fiction of Aharon Appelfeld and the poetry of Abba Kovner and Dan Pagis.

In light of this background, the recent appearance in English of David Grossman's novel *See Under: "Love"** must be counted as something of an event. Grossman, whose *Yellow Wind*, a journalistic account of a journey through the West Bank on the eve of the Palestinian uprising, was published here last year, is thirty-five years old and Israeli-born; he is the author as well of two earlier novels and a number of children's stories. He belongs to what might be called a third generation of Israeli writers, those who came of age after the Yom Kippur War in 1973. His new novel is the first important piece of writing on the Holocaust to be produced by this younger group, and quite apart from its extraordinary literary qualities, it may have things to tell us about a generation which grew up not only at a different remove from those events but also within a society very different from the one that shaped earlier writers.

See Under: "Love" commands attention on its own because of the very large ambitions which are most evident in the series of big ideas it seeks to float aloft. These ideas tend toward the metaphysical: can the effects of the Holocaust on survivors and their children be undone? Can love survive under conditions of adversity? Is it possible so to be transformed as to see the world through the intelligence of another? Can the past be altered by being retold? Is evil susceptible to the powers of art?

The last is the crux of Grossman's undertaking. Throughout all of the stories-within-stories and multiple frames of reference in this complex and complicated work, one challenge is presented again and again, and it has to do with the attempt of the imagination—by which Grossman means the storytelling faculty of invention—to redeem the suffering of the past by, in a sense, rewriting it. The audacity of this challenge is patent, and one might be tempted to dismiss it out of hand were it not for Grossman's genuine achievement and the many pleasures afforded in the reading. That in the end the attempt is impossible perhaps goes without saying

See Under: "Love" is made up of four discrete sections which, though interconnected, tell separate stories. There is a puzzle quality here. The connections are not always obvious, and, in the often annoying manner of postmodernist fables, the reader is obliged to participate in the game by searching for elusive correlations. Grossman's most daring move is to make the difference among the stories hinge on style. Each of the four sections is written (*à la* Joyce in *Ulysses*) in a radically different Hebrew style, ranging from the stilted locutions of the 19th-century Haskalah ("Enlightenment") to the spare pseudo-precision of modern scientific description. At times the chosen style is of a piece with the story being told, at other times ironically at odds with it—the point being that style is not merely surface texture but a mode of perceiving the world.

Grossman's manipulation of these varieties of discourse is brilliant, though it often leaves the

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reader groping for a stable point of literary and even moral reference behind, or within, the play of voices. In any case, the emphasis on style, and on features of style highly peculiar to the history of modern Hebrew, poses significant problems of translation. Happily, Betsy Rosenberg has met these problems with flair and a virtuoso range of effects; in order to suggest the texture of the original, she has also wisely chosen to leave in her text bits and pieces of Hebrew and Yiddish.

THE first section of *See Under: "Love"* is the most accessible, and in it the ratio of aspiration to achievement is the most satisfying. The section is named for Momik (a diminutive of Shlomo), the nine-year-old only child of two survivors, Gisella and Tuvia Neuman; the story, set in the mid-50's, takes place over a period of five months in an immigrant neighborhood in Jerusalem. It is told from the perspective of Momik himself, a perspective captured not only in the lilt of childhood speech with its run-on sentences but also in the immigrant inflections of a child who speaks Yiddish at home and Hebrew at school.

Like many survivors, the Neumans say very little about their ordeal during the war. Momik knows that his life is different in a thousand ways from that of other children—he is not encouraged to have friends, he is not allowed to go on an overnight class trip, his father never says more than a few words to him—and he further knows that all these differences are the consequences of what happened Over There (as his parents call it). Yet because of his parents' silence, precisely that which would explain his life is kept from him.

Being a boy of methodical intelligence and adventuresome spirit, Momik treats this blank as a mystery to be solved, or (as he quotes Sherlock Holmes), "what one man invents another can discover." Arthur Conan Doyle, Jules Verne, *Emile and the Detectives* are in fact just some of the boyhood reading through which Momik absorbs his terms for understanding the world. For Grossman, the fantasies expressed in juvenile adventure literature are not merely a passing point of reference; here and in the third and fourth sections of the novel they become the central vehicle for weightier explorations of the redemptive capacities of art.

The literature of childhood adventure is embodied here and later in the novel in the figure of Anshel Wasserman, Momik's senile and demented great uncle. At the beginning of the century Wasserman had been famous as the author of an immensely popular series of adventure tales, written in Hebrew and translated into many European languages. Now, reduced by his experiences in the Nazi camps to mumbling the same few incomprehensible words, Wasserman has suddenly been deposited with the Neumans, and is put in Momik's charge. It is Wasserman's arrival that sets off Momik's quest to solve the mystery of his parents' life by keeping secret "spy notebooks" in which he records clues unwittingly dropped by grown-ups—including the words his father screams in sleep at night—about life Over There. The passages reproducing his decodings of this mystery derive their skewed pathos from the childish, almost comical innocence of Momik's approach to the macabre:

> . . . there was a war in that kingdom, and Papa was the Emperor and also the chief warrior, a commando fighter. One of his friends (his lieutenant?) was called Sondar. . . . They all lived in a big camp with a complicated name. . . . Also there were some trains around, but that part isn't clear. . . . And there were also these big campaigns in Papa's kingdom called Aktions, and sometimes (probably to make people feel proud) they would have really incredible parades, like we have on Independence Day. Left, right, left, right, Papa screams in his sleep. . . .

Like the heroes of all good mystery stories, Momik seeks not only to put together the pieces of the puzzle but also to save the hapless victims of evil: "Who else can save Mama and Papa from their fears and silences and krechtzes?" His rescue efforts revolve around the elliptical allusions his parents have often made to something called the Nazi Beast, which he imagines literally as an actual creature imprisoning his parents. He sets out "to find the Beast and tame it and make it good, and persuade it to change its ways and stop torturing people and get it to tell him what happened Over There and what it did to those people." But beyond this self-appointed mission, which takes the practical form of keeping a menagerie of captive animals in his basement, there is the sad fact that the person Momik most needs to rescue is himself, and the inevitable failure of his campaign leads to something more than a loss of innocence. It is too much for him; he collapses, defeated by the Beast.

THE second section of *See Under: "Love"* is titled "Bruno," for the Polish-Jewish writer Bruno Schulz, and is the most difficult. The real Schulz was shot by a Gestapo officer on the streets of the Jewish quarter in his native Drohobycz, Poland in November 1942. In Grossman's telling, however, he does not die; escaping to Danzig, he jumps into the sea, and instead of drowning he is embraced by the ocean and becomes a fish, developing fins and gills and learning to roam the oceans swept along by the currents with great shoals of sea creatures.

All these events are related in that surrealistic or "magic-realist" mode familiar from the works of Guenter Grass and Gabriel García Márquez and, of course, Bruno Schulz himself, in which the remarkable and the fantastic, described in minute naturalistic detail, are made to seem part of the ordinary scheme of things. The Hebrew style Grossman adopts for this section evokes the lushly figurative diction of Avraham Shlonsky and Natan Alterman, the preeminent modernist poets of the Jewish community of Palestine between the two world wars, whose verse, characterized by musicality and a penchant for neologism, draws deeply upon French and Russian symbolism. Here, however, the novel's stylistic experimen-

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talism is overextended; what may be evocative in conception turns out to be tedious in practice.

NOT all is watery depths, fortunately. We meet Momik, now in his late twenties, as a published poet of "thin-lipped," ironic Hebrew verse. He has put aside his poetry in order to try to write, with little success, the story of Anshel Wasserman's experiences during the Holocaust, for he has been assailed by "visions of the old man locked inside the story for so long, a ghostly ship turned away at every port," while he, Momik, remains "his only hope of liberation, of salvaging his story." It is not only Wasserman he is trying to rescue but, again, himself as well. Momik's life as an adult has not been a success. He has not been able to drive away the ghosts his parents brought from Europe; he can neither trust nor love nor extend empathy. After his long-barren wife Ruth gives birth to a son, he helplessly watches his anger begin to poison his offspring as well.

The way out comes via Schulz's *The Street of Crocodiles*, given to him as a parting gift by a woman, a kind of all-in-one Holocaust groupie and muse, with whom Momik has had an affair. The experience of reading Schulz is a revelation. The constriction of Momik's imagination is overcome by Schulz's passion for language, the "veritable stampede of panting, perspiring words." He becomes obsessed with Schulz, seeking not merely to write like him but to become him. He wants, in short, to submerge himself in Schulz, and it is this desire that provides the link to the oceanic passages here.

Going off to Poland to swim in the waters off contemporary Gdansk—which, he is certain, embraced and enveloped Schulz forty years earlier—Momik receives there reassuring news of Bruno through long conversations with the sea, personified as a knowing, world-weary vamp of marvelous and constantly changing polymorphous possibilities. What happens to Momik in the bosom of the ocean—it involves a vision of Bruno's messianic Age of Genius—cannot, as one might imagine, be easily summarized. Enough to say that the ocean serves as a mythic representation of the unconscious, a realm in which transformations are possible and one can push through to become another.

The prize Momik wins for his descent into the unconscious is the capacity to tell the story of his great-uncle Anshel Wasserman as well as the story told by Wasserman to a concentration-camp commandant by the name of Neigel. This tale-within-a-tale occupies the remainder of the novel (the "Wasserman" and "Kazik" sections), and it is more straightforward than what has come before—but no less fantastic.

WASSERMAN'S wife and daughter have been shot upon arrival at the camp, but Wasserman is not allowed to die; by some decree of fate, he *cannot* die. It comes to the attention of the camp commander that Wasserman is the author of tales which he, Neigel, had hugely enjoyed as a child; he therefore installs Wasserman as his "house Jew"(much as was Bruno Schulz in Drohobycz) with Scheherezade-like orders to amuse him when the day's work is done. Wasserman consents, but, in a reversal of the Scheherezade motif, on condition that Neigel shoot him at the end of each evening's telling.

Even in this section of the book, Grossman does not permit Momik to break out of his solipsism. As the story is conceived, Momik is actually physically present in the camp—no one but Wasserman can see him, presumably—standing over Wasserman's shoulder and frequently being addressed by him. Not for a moment are we allowed to forget that it is Momik who has brought Wasserman back to life—in every sense, reinvented him—and given him a chance to live his life over again.

The figure of Wasserman moves the theme of juvenile literature to the center of *See Under: "Love."* Although his children's stories were penned in the 20th century, their ethos and style hark back to an earlier era, and Wasserman himself writes in the antique modern Hebrew of the Enlightenment—this is the style of the entire section. Furthermore, like the literature of the Haskalah, his stories are deliberately universal and didactic in their concerns. They narrate the adventures of the Children of the Heart, a band of young people from different backgrounds and lands who join together to fight for right all over the globe and, through their trusty time machine, in earlier eras as well, rescuing a runaway American slave, assisting a scientist in his battle against cholera, lending support to Robin Hood, and so forth.

The twist comes with Wasserman's resurrection as a storyteller. What the Nazi commandant wants from him is more of the same: benevolent, childlike tales that will divert his overwrought mind. What Wasserman gives him instead is something very different. He again conjures up the Children of the Heart, but now, instead of the brave adolescents Neigel knew and loved as a child, they are forty years older, not broken exactly but ragged and disillusioned. He places them, furthermore, not in the eternal land of youth but squarely within the world the Nazis have made in Eastern Europe. Neigel complains bitterly: he is being cheated. But Wasserman invokes against him the sacred principle of the inviolability of art; a story, he avers, cannot depart from its own truth. Given his elaborate second chance, Wasserman succeeds in rising above juvenile fantasies and in placing his gift for invention within the constraints of historical actuality.

THE final section of *See Under: "Love,"* no less exorbitantly inventive than those preceding, is titled "The Complete Encyclopedia of Kazik's Life." Kazik is a newborn baby, discovered by the aging Children of the Heart in the abandoned Warsaw zoo. The baby is found to suffer from a rare disease which causes it to experience the entire human life cycle within the course of twenty-four hours. This miniaturized life provides the unique occasion for Momik, posing now as the voice of a complete editorial staff, "to compile an encyclopedia

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embracing most of the events in the life of a single individual, as well as his distinctive psychosomatic functions, orientation to his surroundings, desire, dreams, etc." The encyclopedia is of course organized alphabetically, with numerous cross references, the title of the novel being one of them.

This section, preoccupied with definition and classification, is written in stiff and hyper-rational social-sciencese, which plays in counterpoint to the horrible irrationality of the fate that awaits Kazik. The key here is suggested in words used earlier about Bruno Schulz: "For him the Holocaust was a laboratory gone mad, accelerating and intensifying human processes a hundredfold." Kazik represents the freak intensity of human experience under conditions of the greatest extremity. Although the Children of the Heart do their best to educate Kazik under these conditions and to guide him as he rapidly progresses through his life, their efforts come to naught. Kazik requests to see the world beyond the zoo; what he is shown are the electrified barbed-wire fences of Neigel's concentration camp. Horrified, he commits suicide two hours short of his allotted twenty-four.

Yet Kazik's fate triggers Neigel's own suicide, and this death represents a triumph of the storyteller's art. By locating his nightly tales in the present reality, and by involving Neigel in the telling, Wasserman has managed to lure the commandant into an emotional identification with the victims of persecution. The death of Kazik in a world he has helped to create—Neigel has by now ceased to distinguish between story and life—is too much for him. Not that he has been morally regenerated, but the story has unmanned him, made him hateful to himself, and the taking of his own life becomes the only way out. So *See Under: "Love"* is brought to a close.

THOUGH the lengthy description I have offered may seem to tell too much, it fails to touch on dozens of this novel's motifs and characters. For example, all of the deranged survivors Wasserman meets on the public benches of his neighborhood in the "Momik" section are in the "Kazik" section amplified into full-fledged characters with individual life histories. One wonders, indeed, whether the whole conception of an encyclopedia may have come into being as a brilliant "solution" for these many tangential narratives, which could thereby simply be filed as entries without being integrated into a narrative fabric. Here and in many other instances, at any rate, one yearns for a sober editorial hand.

But the problems of *See Under: "Love"* go deeper than what could have been solved by judicious pruning and disciplined restraint. Grossman is endowed with literary genius, but the particular models he has chosen to follow are precisely of the sort that fan the flames of his native extravagance rather than lending it structure and purpose.

The novel imitates two key features of the "postmodernist" sensibility in contemporary fiction: self-conscious literary borrowing and the solipsistic preoccupation with literary artifice. As to the first, it must be said that Grossman's decision to narrate each of the four sections in a different Hebrew style succeeds completely; in its own context, each style is consistently sustained and thematically supported. Yet within this canny architectonic design, Grossman has opened the door to a swarm of other influences. Reading through the novel is like making one's way down the halls of a museum: look, here's a Grass, there's a García Márquez! And, for the Hebrew reader, there is Sholem Aleichem, Mendele Mocher Seforim, Yoram Kaniuk, and many others. The possibility of total derivativeness is parodied in Wasserman's pulp adventure tales, with their indebtedness to Karl May, Jack London, James Fenimore Cooper, *et al.*

Nice distinctions might be made here among literary concepts of allusion, homage, and imitation, but they are swept aside by the riveting, monumental figure of Bruno Schulz. Schulz has exerted a pull on other writers, especially Cynthia Ozick in *The Messiah of Stockholm*, and it would take a reader with intimate knowledge of Schulz's Polish-language stories to say just how Grossman has appropriated him. But the dominant impression is that, to adapt the oceanic metaphor of the "Bruno" section, Grossman has been sucked under by this material. If Momik, as the novel's narrator, seems to understand thematically the difference between being influenced by someone and *becoming* that person, for Grossman the novelist this boundary at times disappears altogether.

WHICH brings us to Grossman's preoccupation with the mechanics of storytelling. After the relatively "straight" description of Momik's boyhood, the focus of the novel shifts to the question of how one *writes* about the Holocaust. We are given an account of Momik's case of writer's block, then of his search for inspiration from Bruno Schulz; finally there is the re-invention of Wasserman as a writer and, to cap it all, the completed encyclopedia. In the story of Wasserman and the Nazi commandant Grossman puts together his most involved arrangement of Chinese boxes. It is Momik who has conjured up Wasserman, who in turn tells the story to Neigel, who, for his part, is not only morally overcome by the story—thus changing historical reality retroactively by means of fiction—but steals Wasserman's story and retells it to his wife as his own. All the while Momik, the conjuror, is present inside the frame, and is addressed by Wasserman in direct discourse. The result is a constant cutting back and forth between narrative contexts as the devices by which the story is told are deliberately exposed to view.

The deep purpose of these games, one supposes, is to make a statement about the ineluctable interdependence of reality and illusion, event and story. Grossman's maneuvers, however, end by producing the opposite effect. Instead of becoming interwined, the realms of art and life seem to proceed along separate and ever diverging tracks. In *See Under: "Love"* the

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realm of "life," in the sense of reality represented fictively without magical transformation, is unrelievedly bleak: the deformed emotions of Momik's parents, the murder of Bruno Schulz in the streets of Drohobycz, the shooting of Wasserman's wife and daughter, Wasserman's own hard labor in the latrines and crematoria. This unbearable sadness is summed up in an aside Momik utters about his Aunt Idka, who came to his wedding wearing a Band-Aid over the number on her arm. "All evening I couldn't tear my eyes away from her arm. I felt as if under that clean little Band-Aid lay a deep abyss that was sucking us all in: the hall, the guests, the happy occasion, me."

Yet although this cosmetic bandage is occasionally removed in *See Under: "Love"* to reveal the horror beneath, most of the novel takes place in the realm of art and storytelling, a much happier place by far. Thus, not only is Bruno Schulz brought back to life, and Wasserman too given a second chance, but, in an ultimate compliment to the power of art, an SS officer is conquered by the enchantments of story.

WHAT is most startling about *See Under: "Love"* is the moral vision implicit in this divergence, most strikingly embodied in the tales Wasserman tells to snare his prey. Wasserman's own moral code is a direct transcription of the naive universal values which his children's tales were designed to inculcate. All men are brothers. Band together to work for the useful and the good. Be faithful and courageous in the face of evil. Amazingly, Wasserman's vision stands here unmolested and unreconstructed, as if to say that *this* is the truth of art, everywhere and always.

Through the figure of Momik, Grossman had an opportunity to project a subtler and deeper understanding of the links between his dissociated realms of art and life. We could have been shown, for instance, how Momik's life is affected by his success in telling Wasserman's story and in compiling his encyclopedia. What would it mean to return to the business of everyday life after writing about such horror? But Grossman, apparently unwilling to renounce the consolations of story, passes the opportunity by.

The limitations of this vision stem from a fantasy of rescue which Grossman seems not to want to relinquish. Integral to the juvenile literature invoked so extensively in the novel is the notion that the weak and defenseless can be saved by the courage and secret intelligence of others. For Grossman the magic ring is not action but language. As a child, Momik works to deliver his parents from the clutches of the Nazi Beast through the words in his spy notebooks. As an adult, he seeks salvation from terminal embitterment by submersion in Bruno Schulz, himself saved from death as a reward for his luminous prose. Wasserman is rescued from mediocrity as a literary hack and given the chance to practice true art; and it is that art which saves Neigel from his bestiality. While in the early, "Momik" section such fantasies of rescue are deployed to great ironic and pathetic effect, later the novel seems drawn to a disturbingly close identification with the figure of Wasserman, who, despite his marvelous vividness as a character, remains fixed in the adolescent world of his literary creations.

DOES Grossman's work mark a new, third-generation response to the Holocaust in Israeli literature? It is, of course, too soon to say. But two issues that emerge from *See Under: "Love"* are worth bearing in mind in this connection. The first is the book's relationship to the Jewish past. Historically, the Jewish literature of response to catastrophe has consciously invoked the models of the Bible and midrashic legend and exegesis, even if in modern times the relationship has been one of parody and rebellion. In *See Under: "Love,"* this literary tradition simply does not figure. Grossman's imagination is engaged by certain universal questions raised by Jewish suffering, and his literary models are correspondingly alien to the Jewish canon.

A second, more delicate issue touches on what might be termed the uses of the Holocaust. What this novel has to teach us about the Holocaust itself, in any of its dimensions, is in the end quite limited. The description of Momik's childhood is an exception: a brilliant and genuine contribution to our understanding of the effects of the catastrophe on children of survivors. But after this initial point *See Under: "Love"* moves off in another direction, becoming absorbed in the drama of the writer's soul, the virtuoso manipulation of narrative, the redemptive potentialities of art. The novel's ostensible subject is reduced to a backdrop on which the adventures of the artistic ego are projected.

The Holocaust presents a singular temptation to the artist: on the one hand, its bleakness as a subject acts as a discipline, giving little scope for grandiosity or revery; on the other hand, to the undisciplined or narcissistic imagination, that very bleakness may spur fantasy and ostentation without end. Grossman's daring novel may, indeed, thus betoken a disturbingly wider impatience with the intractability of the Holocaust as a subject—and by extension (as his more recent, "soft" political writings would suggest) with the tragic element in human conflict altogether.

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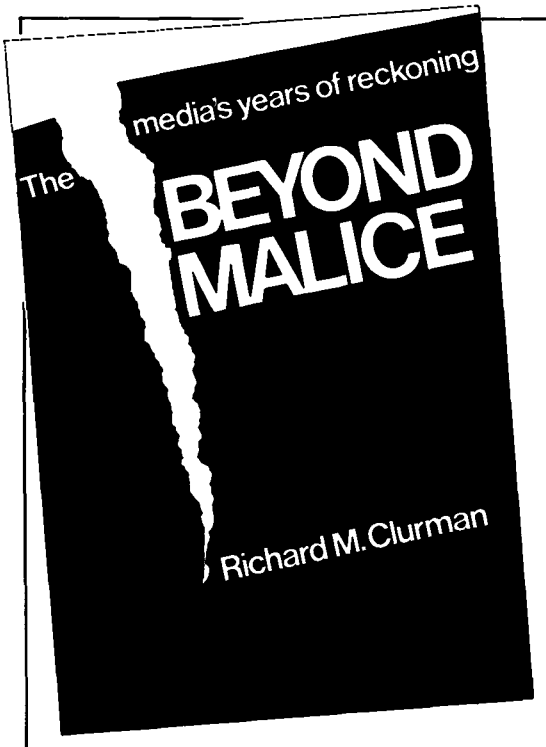

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In Memory of Vilna

FROM THAT PLACE AND TIME: A MEMOIR 1938-1947. By LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ. *Norton. 333 pp. $21.95.*

Reviewed by DONNA RIFKIND

LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ'S memoir is at once a historical account, a story of personal development, an act of memorialization, and a tale of rescue. To her earlier, definitive documentation of the Holocaust in *The War Against the Jews* 1933-1945 (1975, reissued 1986) and *A Holocaust Reader* (1976) she here adds a reckoning, as it were, of her motives as a historian.

Mrs. Dawidowicz was born and raised in New York, the daughter of nonreligious, leftist Jews who believed that the Yiddish language—the common people's tongue—ought to serve as the foundation for Jewish national existence. At Hunter College in the 1930's she was active for a time in the Young Communist League, but became disillusioned after the Moscow show trials of 1936. As a graduate student at Columbia she took an interest in Yiddish and modern Jewish history, and won a fellowship to study at the Yiddish Scientific Institute—known as the YIVO—in Vilna.

The year was 1938, a particularly inauspicious time for a twenty-three-year-old Jewish woman to travel alone to Europe. Hitler had just invaded Austria; anti-Jewish riots were erupting with increasing violence in Vilna and throughout Poland. But this vivacious, adventuresome girl was not to be deterred from her dream of studying in the city Napoleon had once called "the Jerusalem of Lithuania."

Jewish Vilna on the eve of its destruction was a place of ancient echoes. Records show Jews to have lived there in pre-Christian times, with increasing numbers migrating to the city beginning in the 15th century. Through hundreds of years of recurrent anti-Semitic violence, interspersed with brief periods of tolerance, Jewish culture survived, and even flourished. In the 18th century the city was the residence of the Vilna Gaon, the great rabbinical scholar and spiritual authority; in the early 1900's it was the birthplace of the Jewish labor movement and a center of Zionism. A great synagogue, erected in 1633, was still active when Mrs. Dawidowicz arrived in 1938, holding 5,000 worshippers at its Rosh Hashanah services.

By 1938 Vilna's Jews numbered 60,000—nearly 30 percent of the city's total population. Yiddish was heard everywhere: "You could live a full life in Vilna," writes Mrs. Dawidowicz, "as many Vilna Jews did, speaking only Yiddish, without knowing much Polish or knowing it well." Schools, synagogues, newspapers, welfare institutions, and cultural events all functioned in a large cooperative network. The YIVO, which welcomed Mrs. Dawidowicz in 1938 as an *aspirant*, or research fellow, had prospered since its founding as a scholarly institution in 1925 with the aim of encouraging the recognition of Yiddish not as a street tongue but as a language of high culture. Soon Mrs. Dawidowicz became close to her YIVO colleagues and to a group of writers and artists known as *yung vilne*, Young Vilna, whose members included the Yiddish poets Abraham Sutzkever and Chaim Grade. The group would meet often at Velfkeh's ("Wolfie's") café to argue about art and politics. Occasionally they would attend concerts or the theater.

Yet all this was in some sense chimerical. History was moving in wholly other directions. After the collapse of the Russian czarist empire in 1918, Poland had proclaimed itself an independent republic and annexed Vilna; it remained part of Poland until the Bolsheviks recaptured it in 1939. But Polish rule guaranteed no benefits for the Jews of Vilna. Those who had not fled the city during World War I had had to endure a series of nine different military occupations. Poverty, hunger, and anti-Semitic attacks were everyday realities. By the late 1930's, the campaign to intimidate and suppress the Jews of Poland was in full operation.

Vilna's Yiddish civilization, Mrs. Dawidowicz realized shortly after her arrival, was "a feverish flowering in the shadow of death." In fact, she saw, no matter what the fate of Vilna's Jews was to be, Yiddish was in danger of disappearing. Assimilation, if the government were ever to allow it, would spell an end to an autonomous Yiddish culture, while Poland's present attitude toward the Jews promised little future for them at all. "I had come to Vilna for its Jewish history and its thickly layered past," muses Mrs. Dawidowicz, "but each passing day the present became more compelling than the past, bringing new dangers of war and intimations of disaster." As she at last conceded to herself, "Everything I loved in Vilna rested upon a rotten crumbling foundation."

By November 1938, the time of *Kristallnacht* in Germany, the Polish government was more intent than ever on driving the Jews out of public life or, preferably, out of the country altogether. Subsidies for Jewish schools were revoked and plans were made to outlaw the Jewish method of *shehitah*, the ritual slaughtering of animals. A stunned panic took hold among Vilna's Jews with the approaching likelihood of a Nazi invasion.

Though guilty and reluctant, Mrs. Dawidowicz knew that she had to return to the United States. In late summer 1939 she fled to Copenhagen via Berlin, where she witnessed the "pageant of Nazi war frenzy." In Copenhagen, waiting for a Boston-bound ship, she learned of the German invasion of Poland on September 1. On the day she finally sailed, England and France had already declared war.

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From 1939 to 1942 Mrs. Dawidowicz worked at the New York branch of the YIVO as assistant to the research director. Along with everybody else, she was forced to watch and wait for trickles of news about the war in Europe, her hatred of the Germans growing with the increasing frequency of reports of the slaughter of Jews. Through the sieges of Moscow and Leningrad, the Warsaw ghetto uprising and its brutal end, Mrs. Dawidowicz spent days and weeks and months that were, she remembers, like a prolonged Yom Kippur, a protracted Tisha b'Av—solemn periods of atonement and mourning.

As for Vilna, by July 1944, when the Russians captured the city from the Nazis, the ghetto into which the Jews were forced had already been liquidated, the YIVO building bombed, the entire city destroyed. Over 100,000 people had been murdered there, most of them Jews, most of them buried in a mass grave site at the nearby village of Ponary. Twenty-five hundred or so had survived by hiding in the forest or—like Chaim Grade—somehow escaping into Russia. Nearly all of the people Mrs. Dawidowicz had counted as friends and colleagues were dead.

The YIVO in New York, in a desperate attempt to redeem the hard work of the massacred scholars, almost immediately conceived a plan to enlist the U.S. government's help in recovering the Vilna YIVO library. Miraculously, part of the collection was found after the war in a former Nazi stronghold in Frankfurt, a repository maintained with bizarre care by vandals who had decreed the destruction of Jewish civilization even as they stole art works, books, manuscripts, ritual objects, and other priceless artifacts from their victims. Among the recovered YIVO documents would be found a diary belonging to Mrs. Dawidowicz's erstwhile patron in Vilna, Zelig Kalmanovich, written before he died in the ghetto, and hidden there; in it she would discover this passage: "Heaps of books lie on the floor of the YIVO's reading room—a graveyard of books, a mass burial plot, casualties of the war of Gog and Magog, just like their owners."

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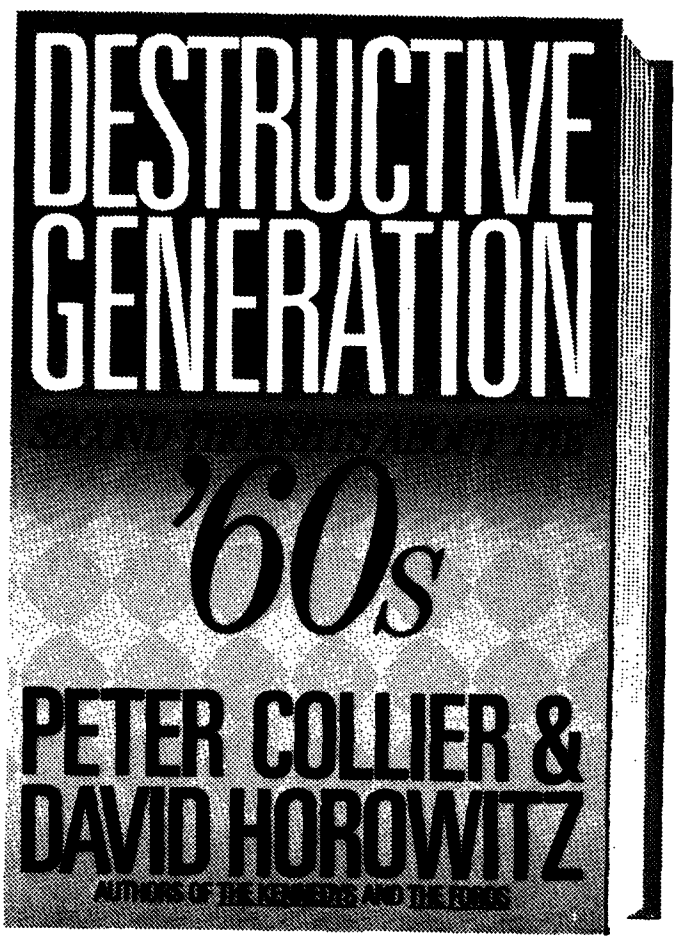
—Chilton Williamson, Jr.,
The Los Angeles Times



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In 1946 Mrs. Dawidowicz went to occupied Germany to work with Jewish survivors in the displaced-persons camps. As bitterly as she hated the Germans and their country, she wanted to pay homage to the European dead by rendering service to those who remained alive. Refugees from Poland were pouring into the American zone in Munich; they included survivors of a terrible pogrom in Kielce *after* the war when, having attempted to return to their homes, they had encountered instead, yet again, the unabated storm of Polish anti-Semitism.

Mrs. Dawidowicz worked to provide educational materials, books for libraries, and newsprint for the camp. She managed to obtain Yiddish typefaces for printing machines, thereby continuing her one-woman campaign to keep the doomed language alive. She learned not to sentimentalize the survivors. "Suffering did not always ennoble," she discovered; but "even so, I never could look at a tattooed forearm without feeling a sense of humility."

Her last duty was to catalog the restored YIVO books and manuscripts in preparation for their shipment to New York, a task whose fulfillment served as a constant reminder to her of the lives lost in Vilna. She writes: "I had come to see that Vilna had been reduced to fragments of paper and fragments of memory. I knew that whatever I rescued from oblivion was all that could ever be rescued from the ruins of Vilna."

LUCY DAWIDOWICZ's feats of historical objectivity in *The War Against the Jews* are wholly matched by her subjective accomplishment in *From That Place and Time*. The dangers in writing such a memoir are clear: self-aggrandizement, empty sentimentality, cliché. Mrs. Dawidowicz avoids all of these difficulties, but her real achievement consists of much more than sidestepping obstacles. Probably no other writer of our time could so adroitly blend the outward-looking range of the historian with the inward-searching passion of the eyewitness, or turn so personal an attempt at explaining the inexplicable into an act of public service.

In "Belsen Remembered," an essay included in her 1977 collection *The Jewish Presence*, Mrs. Dawidowicz cited an ancient Jewish legend: when God revealed the Torah at Sinai, all Israel, living and dead and not yet born, were recipients of the gift, "so that every Jew in the course of history has had his personal share of the revelation." Mrs. Dawidowicz went on in that essay to quote from a poem by Jacob Glatstein, *Nisht di meysim loybn got* ("The Dead Praise Not the Lord"), which carries the legend forward and applies it invertedly to the Nazi era, suggesting that all Jews, living and dead and not yet born, have now been given the burden of the memory of the murdered European Jews. *From That Place and Time* is Lucy Dawidowicz's searing personal testimony to the terms of that grave, ongoing obligation.

Lenin's Heritage

THE GRAND FAILURE: THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF COMMUNISM IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI. *Scribners. 270 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by WHITTLE JOHNSTON

IN HIS latest book, Zbigniew Brzezinski reflects on four problems that have deeply engaged his energies for over a third of a century: the Soviet Union, the Communist world in general, totalitarianism, and possible alternatives to totalitarianism. One notes a continuity of concern between the present work and such predecessors as *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (1956, with Carl J. Friedrich), *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict* (1960), *Alternative to Partition* (1965), and *Between Two Ages* (1970). But significant discontinuities should be noted as well, especially the striking contrast between the ebullient sense of expectation in *The Grand Failure* and the sober sense of threat in its most immediate predecessor, *Game Plan* (1986).

In Part I of *The Grand Failure*, a chapter each is devoted to Lenin, Stalin, and Brezhnev. The portraits are sharp, the attacks slashing. The Leninist era was marked, writes Brzezinski, by ambiguity: on the one hand the New Economic Policy (NEP) and some intellectual and cultural openness; on the other hand, the consolidation of one-party rule and the pervasive use of mass terror. The relative weight of the two trends resolved all ambiguity, however. For Brzezinski, Leninism is essentially "*a conspiracy in power* . . . poised for an all-out confrontation with society . . . to prompt the forcible *withering away* not of the state but *of the society* as an autonomous entity" (emphasis in original).

Brzezinski as swiftly dispatches any ambiguity concerning the historical relation between Lenin and Stalin:

> It was Lenin who created the system that made the crimes of Stalin possible. Moreover, not only did Lenin make Stalin possible, but Lenin's ideological dogmatism and his political intolerance largely precluded any other alternative from arising. In essence, the enduring legacy of Leninism was Stalinism, and that is the strongest historical indictment of Lenin's role in the construction of socialism within Russia.

Stalin well understood the Leninist legacy, and to avoid any risk of the party being swallowed up by the society, brought about an "unprecedented pulverization of society."

As for Brezhnev, his era was one of "stagnant Stalinism"—i.e., a quasi-Stalinist restoration minus the state-induced social change and the massive terror.

In Brzezinski's judgment, the task facing Gorbachev today thus derives (in part) from the fact that the Soviet system is an "ossified product of three formative stages." The easiest to attack is the Brezhnev legacy of personal corruption, economic backwardness, and social stagnation; more difficult is the Stalinist legacy of vested interests; most difficult is the Leninist legacy, which legitimizes the whole

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Soviet experience. Gorbachev may have had no choice but to assert that *perestroika* is based on Leninism, but in the process he has revitalized the party's claim to a monopoly of truth and power and has thereby become locked in "an intractable historical paradox," for genuine *perestroika* requires a repudiation of Leninism.

In the three chapters of Part II Brzezinski explores, in more detail, the dilemmas that confront would-be Soviet reformers. The first is the risk that they will be charged with the dread sin of "revisionism." Gorbachev clearly seems vulnerable to such an attack in the light of his elevation of political reform above economic reform.

The second is what Brzezinski calls the "dynamic to disunion," according to which the attempt to remedy any given deficiency in the system serves only to highlight the unlikelihood of its being resolved unless many other deficiencies are confronted. One is thus carried from concern about economic reform to concern about social priorities, from there to problems of political democratization and the role of the party, then to questions of ideology, religion, and culture, and thence to questions of Stalinism. From here it is but a step to "potentially the most unsettling of all domestic political dilemmas"—internal nationality questions—as well as to a range of foreign-policy problems.

Third, the key question—not just for the Soviet Union but for Communism generally—is whether the Soviet political system is decaying or is evolving into something more innovative. The fundamental issue here is that while economic reform is unlikely to succeed without political decentralization, the latter will entail the restructuring of the empire into a genuine confederation. Brzezinski concludes that "It is doubtful that the Russian political elite would be prepared to trade the effective loss of their imperial power for the benefits of economic decentralization." But in the meantime, Gorbachev's reforms are creating constituencies for change which, in the absence of alternatives to the Leninist legacy, are contributing to "the build-up of a potentially revolutionary situation" and "the possibility of the actual dismantling of the Soviet Union."

This brings us to Part III, where Brzezinski's central contention is that in Eastern Europe, Marxism-Leninism is seen as an alien doctrine imposed by an imperial power. Now under way there is a process "similar to the human body's rejection of a transplanted organ."

Poland, through the achievement of "self-emancipation," has taken the lead in this transformation. This extraordinary achievement has been made possible by the strength of Polish society, based on

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tradition, such "islands of autonomy" as the Church and the peasantry, and Solidarity. Yet it is by no means clear to Brzezinski that Poland can move from social solidarity to democratic pluralism; the "socialist pluralism" Jaruzelski has promoted is a far cry from what the society now demands. Unless the Communist leadership by stages yields its monopoly of power, it will be faced with "all-consuming revolutionary violence."

The Soviet-type subordination of society to the state is also coming to an end in other parts of Eastern Europe, most notably in Hungary. Beyond this, the growth of a *Central* European identity among Czechs, Poles, and Hungarians signifies their rejection of the Soviet-sponsored pretense of a common "socialist culture." Aware of the weakening of the bonds of ideology, Moscow has in turn resorted to "imperial retrenchment," seeking to strengthen its hand through increased economic integration and a tightened structure for the Warsaw Pact.

THE prospect for Communism in China (the subject of Part IV) may be seen as the opposite of that in Eastern Europe, i.e., "organic absorption" as against "organic rejection." Given the antiquity and richness of their civilization, the Chinese have had the confidence to forge their own strategy of modernization. Even so, the process has involved many destructive excesses, and it is only since the death of Mao in 1976 that leaders like Deng have begun to bring some order and continuity into it. Moreover, Deng has so far been unswerving in his determination to maintain control of the reform process *from above*, according to Brzezinski, who of course was writing well before the recent student protests in Beijing.

"China's leadership," Brzezinski notes, "adopted a course of action in which *perestroika* preceded *glasnost* while in the Soviet Union not only did *glasnost* come before *perestroika* but also more debate about reform took place than actual implementation of reform."

The thesis of Part V is that Communist "praxis"—the unity of theory and practice—has been discredited not only in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China but also in the First and Third Worlds. It has proved increasingly irrelevant to the course of development in Japan or Italy, in France or Spain or Portugal. In Asia we have seen "spectacular examples of socioeconomic failure" (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), while the countries that have led the way in economic development have done so in a "demonstrably nonsocialist fashion." The failure of Communism in Africa has led Moscow to adopt an increasingly selective emphasis on "key targets of strategic opportunity." Brzezinski's main concern is that "Communism may have better prospects in Central America and perhaps Mexico than elsewhere," though even there economic failures and massive human-rights abuses have done much to discredit the movement.

Brzezinski opens Part VI with another severe indictment of Communism's historical record before focusing, in his final and most richly speculative chapter, on the problem of post-Communist transition. He demarcates four phases in the process: Communist Totalitarianism, Communist Authoritarianism, Post-Communist Authoritarianism, and Post-Communist Pluralism. Critical here is the third phase, Post-Communist Authoritarianism, which is likely to have a nationalist aspect. It is in the interest of democracy that this stage be brief, for it could easily explode into a large-scale rebellion that would provoke a repressive reaction. Indeed, in light of recent developments in China, one might suggest that all phases of this process may have unexpected consequences. When all is said and done, however, Brzezinski concludes that "humanity's catastrophic encounter with Communism during the 20th century . . . makes it all the more likely that democracy—and not Communism—will dominate the 21st century."

BRZEZINSKI'S book gives us masterful insights into the brutal disasters Communism has wreaked upon our century. He deserves high praise for his relentless determination to push the analysis back to the source of these horrors: from Gorbachev to Brezhnev to Stalin to their primal origin in Lenin. His governing thesis is sound: that the totalitarian state launches an aggressive war against civil society, smashing it to pieces and recasting the fragments in an Orwellian mold. He applies this thesis with dynamism and range, and through it discovers its creative corollary: that preservation of the vitality and autonomy of society is the indispensable condition of human freedom. He is then able to sketch the rough outlines of the vast political continent now rising above our horizon: the implications of totalitarian decay.

It may come as a surprise to suggest that the chief weaknesses of this vast and imaginative analysis lie in the very limitations of its scope. But four such weaknesses deserve note. What is the relation between the transformation of Communism within and the containment of Communism from without? More specifically, how would Brzezinski relate the thesis of *The Grand Failure* to the very different, defensive concerns of *Game Plan*? Second, the decline of Communism is not equivalent to "the approaching end of Communism as a significant world phenomenon"; on the contrary, declining Communism may pose problems as formidable as those of rising Communism. Third, Locke's faith in civil society—even when reformulated as Brzezinski's "technetronic Lockeanism"—is unlikely to remove Hobbes's looming shadow from the coming century; Leninism, after all, is but a species within a Hobbesian genus which existed long before 20th-century Communism and will persist long after it.

Finally, if we are to press the prosecution from Gorbachev to Lenin, let us then press it from Lenin to Marx, and from Marx to Hegel and his repudiation of Kant. In my view, it is only by grasping and repossessing Kant's understanding of the transcendent nature of freedom that we can be helped back to the ground of our political being.

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Indiscriminate Judgments

THE DEMOCRATIC IMPERATIVE: EXPORTING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. By GREGORY A. FOSSEDAL. *A New Republic Book/Basic Books. 293 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID BROCK

The Democratic Imperative is one of the more sweeping interventionist broadsides in memory, urging the use of any and every lever at our disposal to implant democratic institutions and free-market capitalism everywhere. It is all the more striking that it should appear at a time when the vital idea of exporting democracy is increasingly under suspicion, both within government and among the foreign-policy elites. Unfortunately, in order to contrive what he apparently regards as an evenhandedness in these matters, and thus to orient himself as neither on the Left nor on the Right but rather always on the side of an ever-expanding concept of "democracy," Gregory Fossedal makes a host of exaggerated claims and indiscriminate judgments which, taken together, detract seriously from his book's credibility.

Actually, Fossedal's main effort in this regard is to separate himself from the "Right." That is interesting in itself. As a young journalist first at the *Dartmouth Review* and later on the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, Fossedal made something of a name for himself as a conservative bomb-thrower. Now in residence at Stanford's Hoover Institution, he spends a good deal of time here throwing bombs, instead, at conservatives.

The main sin of these "pessimists," in Fossedal's judgment, is to have constantly overstated the Soviet threat. He writes:

> One way to freeze a nation into inaction is to insist that its opponents are not worthy of concern. But when apathy is absent, despair will do, and in painting the Soviet Union as a sort of infallible, monolithic giant, anti-Communists in the West promote the same result.

Yet since it was, after all, the "pessimistic" critique of Soviet expansionism in the 1970's that led to the reassertion of American power in the 1980's, which in turn paved the way for the trend toward democracy Fossedal wishes to promote, it is hard to understand this statement as other than an effort to "position" himself at some undefined but assuredly non-Right point on the ideological spectrum.

Even more puzzling is Fossedal's reading of the entire postwar period as a succession of democratic gains and Soviet "concessions and retreats." Thus, the period from 1945 to 1970 in Eastern Europe is listed as a setback for the Soviets because "they must initiate what they greatly preferred to avoid: a crushing, all-out assault on Hungary in 1956, construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968." Similarly, we learn that the occupation of Angola, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the backing of the revolution in Nicaragua were defeats for the Soviets, because they were unable to wipe out the forces that took up arms against their puppet regimes.

So GROSS a misrepresentation of the historical record is not without a purpose. It helps to create the impression that the world is quite hospitable to the sort of democratic crusade Fossedal envisages. A similar purpose is served by his assertion that Third World democratization "narrows the sphere" for Soviet subversion. This leaves unconsidered the Soviet-backed guerrilla wars being waged against democratic governments in El Salvador, Guatemala, and the Philippines, not to mention the Soviet military build-up in Asia, despite a decade of democratic progress there, and recent Cuban efforts to

DAVID BROCK *is a senior editor at* Insight *magazine.*

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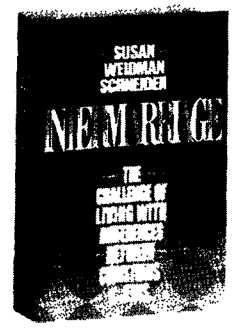

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destabilize Argentina and Venezuela.

Fossedal's optimistic notion of democracy as a "third force" everywhere extends to the Soviet Union itself, where, he predicts, there is "*glasnost* today, democracy tomorrow." But even Fossedal knows that there is not really a democratic force in every country, not even in most countries, at least as the concept of democracy is understood traditionally in the West. So he takes an injudicious turn, labeling all manner of movements for change as "democratic" and then implicitly embracing them all. Unfortunately, the broad-based civilian opposition in Panama can hardly be compared to the radical student movement in South Korea, just as there is simply no equivalence between the Nicaraguan resistance and the hard-core Leninist African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. In the same fashion, Fossedal puts all unelected governments in one basket, with no regard for the rather large differences among the regimes of, say, Cuba's Fidel Castro, Chile's Augusto Pinochet, Rumania's Nicolae Ceausescu, and Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew.

In his attempt to define a single "standard by which we judge what groups to support," Fossedal raises more questions than he answers. If we arm the ANC, as Fossedal proposes, should we support the leftist guerrillas in Chile? Should the United States impose economic sanctions on all nondemocratic countries? What should be done about one-party rule in Mexico, or in most of Africa or the Middle East? What if a Marxist-Leninist should be elected to the presidency of Peru? Fossedal does not address such hard questions.

BUT it is in his treatment of Ronald Reagan, and in particular of the Reagan Doctrine and its architects, that the contradictions, if not the dishonesty, in Fossedal's thinking are most glaringly revealed. One major distortion of the Reagan record occurs in Fossedal's discussion of human rights, where he argues that the Carter and Reagan approaches to this issue were marked more by continuity than discontinuity. Yet the Carter policy turned over Iran to the Ayatollah Khomeini and Nicaragua to the Sandinista junta, while the Reagan approach resulted, in more than a dozen countries, in a transition from authoritarian dictatorship to democracy. The Reagan success is explained by Fossedal as owing to a "turnaround on human rights" in the liberal direction, in which Reagan came to reject the advice of his hard-line advisers. This is simply not the case.

As for the Reagan Doctrine, with its promise of support to democratic freedom fighters, on the one hand that policy is derided here as a species of "mere anti-Communism" and is said to have invited "contempt from Americans and the world." On the other hand, the same Reagan Doctrine, unrealistically hyped-up and just as unrealistically "universalized," serves as one of the main inspirations of this book.

FOSSEDAL rests his case for exporting democracy on a domestic political calculation—that "the Republican animus for Communism [can] simply be fused with the Democratic animus for fascism." Leaving aside the questionable nature of each of the terms here, it is a folly to think that such a "fusion" could be achieved or made workable, and even greater folly to think that, if achieved, it would answer to the task of building democracy where it is most needed, let alone of protecting it where it is most threatened. If Fossedal's recommendations were followed, the Left—both here and abroad—would be happy to take its victories in South Africa and against other authoritarian allies of the United States while refusing to support "mere" anti-Communist initiatives and persisting in its efforts to undermine democratic governments in places like El Salvador.

What President Reagan said in a message to Congress on exporting democracy in 1986 still remains the case today: "Soviet-style dictatorships . . . are an almost unique threat to peace, both before and after they consolidate their rule." From Central America to Eastern Europe, this statement could serve as a guidepost for the Bush administration, in the admittedly unlikely event that it should decide to listen to *some* of Fossedal's advice and pursue a foreign policy based on the democratic idea.

Higher Education?

PROFSCAM: PROFESSORS AND THE DEMISE OF HIGHER EDUCATION. By CHARLES J. SYKES. *Regnery Gateway. 304 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by THOMAS SHORT

ProfScam is muckraking journalism; the muck has never been better, but the raking is not always as good as it might be. Sykes sees only a part of the problem in higher education, and therefore he exaggerates that part. In addition, the evidence he adduces is not always well sifted. Still, that evidence is compelling, and if the problem in higher education is not exactly as Sykes sees it, at least he has shown that higher education is indeed a national disgrace.

Let us begin with a sampler of the evidence. At Harvard, the size of the faculty more than doubled from 1952 to 1974, yet during the same period the number of undergraduates increased by only 14 percent while the number of courses in which they were enrolled actually fell by 28 percent. At the University of Wisconsin, it was discovered in 1987 that increased funding for classroom instruction was being used to reduce faculty teaching loads, with the result that fewer classes were taught.

Consequently, the average size of classes has ballooned. A figure of 100 students per course is frequent, and on many state campuses classes of 500 to over 1,000 are common. It is hardly surprising, then, that a University of Illinois professor found in a class consisting primarily of juniors and seniors that 80 percent had never written a term paper or taken an essay-question exam.

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As for what is being taught in these classes, Sykes offers a litany of depressing examples. According to one survey, only 7 percent of college students *think* they could understand a native speaker of another language. Pretentious theorizing permits courses such as one at Middlebury College which discusses issues of aesthetics raised by the films of Brigitte Bardot, while at Duke, literature professors earning six-figure salaries—"the richest Marxists in the country," one colleague quips—teach Louis L'Amour Westerns and films about the Mafia. Harvard's famous core curriculum turns out to be a smorgasbord of 150 specialized courses, such as "Tuberculosis in the 19th Century." And even E.D. Hirsch, Jr., the author of *Cultural Literacy*, is quoted here as reassuring his academic colleagues that to be culturally literate "one does not need to know any specific literary texts."

Research is the excuse made for the "flight from teaching"—yet Sykes quotes former Assistant Secretary of Education Chester E. Finn, Jr.'s charitable estimate that only one professor in ten produces any research worth reading. There has been an enormous explosion in the number of trivial articles, new journals to print them (71 in philosophy alone, 142 in sociology), academic conferences in pleasant locales, books published by university presses to be purchased by few except university librarians—in short, a flood of mediocre stuff, mostly unread. Sykes makes the excellent point that publish-or-perish has spawned fads and esoteric "methodologies" motivated less by the pursuit of knowledge than by the need to crank out publications. The worst offenses are found in the social sciences and humanities, yet even in the natural sciences abuses have grown, including trivial papers, repeated publication of the same data, lower standards of review, and a higher incidence of sloppiness and outright fraud.

Sykes's thesis is that professors, by being organized into academic disciplines, have undermined the teaching function. Especially in the universities, but to some extent also in liberal-arts colleges, hiring, tenure, and promotion depend on review by one's disciplinary peers, in which published scholarship is the only criterion. Consequently, teaching is not rewarded but scholarship is, with the highest salaries and prestige going to those who teach least and publish most. Faculties, in turn, develop loyalty not to their teaching institutions but only to the network of journals and professional societies on which their reputations depend. These "academic villages," as Sykes calls them, are the true locus of academic authority, subverting any effort to reform teaching.

Sykes's solution is to break the authority of the "villages" and have professors spend more time in class. By abolishing tenure and by other means, he would increase the power of administrators to reform the curriculum and teaching. But this proposal shows that Sykes is unaware of the role played by administrators themselves in the academic scam he deplores. It shows, too, that he does not sufficiently appreciate the problem posed by the contemporary academy's political climate.

Readily available statistics, which Sykes does not cite, show the enormous increase that has already taken place in the number of university and college administrators and in their share of academic budgets. From 1976 to 1986, while instructional costs for all U.S. colleges (including library purchases, etc.) went up 21 percent, administrative costs rose at double that rate, or 42 percent. In the University of California system, the number of administrators increased by 31 percent in four years while enrollments increased by only 5 percent. As administrators hire more administrators, their power and sense of importance increase proportionately, as do the salaries they command. This growth is rationalized in part by newfangled programs, curricular and extracurricular, which require more administration than do traditional forms of instruction.

But that is only part of the problem. In private colleges and universities, these new programs are usually started with seed money from the large foundations, whose idea of the good is often less intellectual than social. Hence, the programs they tend to support frequently dilute academic content in favor of social reform. At the very least, what they fund has to be new and different; otherwise what is their *raison d'être*? This provides a powerful motive for administrators to rely on the more radical members of their faculties, always fertile in inventing new ways to use the curriculum to "address social problems" and always willing to design the kind of jazzy "interdisciplinary" studies in which their politics are so often cloaked.

In general Sykes does not appear to recognize the degree to which the culture of the academy is now ruled by radical political ideology. What to him is a transparent scam is to many educators a holy crusade, a vehicle for a revolution that will save the world from patriarchy, racism, capitalist greed, and so on. If administrators were given even more power over faculty and curricula, the result would be a greater increase in politically tendentious teaching.

Sykes writes from the point of view of the educational consumer—i.e., students and their parents. Why, he demands, are these highly paid professors not spending more time in the classroom? But students and their parents are not the only consumers of higher education. The whole of society has a stake in the education of the young—and also in scientific research and in scholarship. The suggestion that such research is itself a kind of dodge, an unwarranted escape from the classroom, is thus misplaced.

Still, though Sykes's charges are not always entirely on the mark, he is basically right about the "scam" that allows scholars to remove themselves from teaching, that overloads academic circuits with inferior work, that raises the cost of education without improving the state of our knowledge, and that results not only in larger classes but in classes taught by underprepared and overworked junior faculty or graduate teaching assistants. Not as eloquent, as erudite, as insightful or as witty as Allan

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Bloom, Sykes nevertheless tells us much more than Bloom does about the sickening tailspin into which American higher education has fallen, and he tells it in a brief, rapid-fire, and useful way.

Saving the Presidency

THE FETTERED PRESIDENCY: LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. Edited by L. GORDON CROVITZ and JEREMY A. RABKIN. *American Enterprise Institute for Public Research. 350 pp. $29.95.*

THE IMPERIAL CONGRESS: CRISIS IN THE SEPARATION OF POWERS. Edited by GORDON S. JONES and JOHN A. MARINI. *Heritage Foundation/Claremont Institute. 366 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by GEORGE RUSSELL

IS THE United States doomed to a weak, Whig version of the presidency? Is the country's great constitutional edifice, a model for so much of the rest of the world, sliding toward untrammeled domination by Congress? Now that the tough rhetoric of the Reagan era has been replaced by the cooperative (or "bipartisan") charm of the Bush administration, such and similar questions about the constitutional separation of powers have begun to loom large on the agenda of Republicans and conservatives, but also of a respectable number of Democrats and moderates.

The rise of concern is hardly coincidental. It derives at least in part from the fate of the Reagan administration, battered on the rocks of Iran-*contra* (itself an expression of a new bludgeon in the hands of Congress, namely, the special-prosecutor statute), and the specific dangers for presidential conduct of foreign policy dramatized in that seemingly endless quagmire. It also is inspired by the post-Reagan tally on the separation-of-powers "scorecard," which reads, approximately, legislative branch 10 (or perhaps 100), executive perhaps 1. This might amaze even Madison, who wrote in *The Federalist* that "In republican governments, the legislative authority necessarily predominates."

Despite Ronald Reagan's apparently rejuvenative effect on the presidency, most of the congressional encroachments enacted before his term of office, that is, during the years of the pullout from Vietnam and Watergate, remained in place after it. In many cases, some vital, they remained unchallenged to any serious degree. The War Powers Act, affecting the President's fundamental role as Commander-in-Chief; the Budget and Impoundment Control Act, crimping the executive ability to affect fiscal priorities; the Ethics in Government Act; the special-prosecutor authority (now affirmed as constitutional by the Supreme Court)—harpoons all, aimed at the executive, and the list goes on and on.

The fact that Speaker of the House Jim Wright has now been impaled on a version of the special-prosecutor lance has not fundamentally altered the case. One does, to be sure, detect great dismay in political Washington at the notion that the Ethics in Government Act, like some lethal virus, may have escaped from the lab to infect Capitol Hill. George Bush has announced his intention to seek something like symmetry in the use of the Act to cover Congress; if he succeeds, the equivalent of limited nuclear deterrence will perhaps have been established for this strange and powerful mechanism. But even if Bush achieves that end, the redress in the balance of power could be marginal. For the legislature, pondering matters of great ethical moment like the Speaker's wife's employment record may have ended that gentleman's career, and slowed down other deliberations; by contrast, the effect of protracted prosecution on the executive branch, as Iran-*contra* shows, is to strip the presidency of a fundamental characteristic of the office, what the Founding Fathers described as "energy." The White House still loses more than it wins through ethical fratricide.

It is easy to dismiss the concern over loss of executive authority as a Republican or conservative stalking horse, made necessary by a lack of congressional power. The fact is, however, that the seemingly permanent Republican lock on the White House and the even more permanent Democratic grip on the Congress (especially the House of Representatives) are themselves signs of a structural, i.e., constitutional, problem. What is unclear to many American commentators is crystalline to every foreign ambassador: in Washington, federal power has been redivided, subdivided, reblended, and delegated so profoundly that, in many cases, purposiveness of government has virtually disappeared. As Paul Bator, distinguished legal scholar and one-time counselor to the Department of Justice, notes in a contribution to *The Fettered Presidency*: "It seems as if the very purpose of government today is to develop new and ingenious ways to stop, break down, or delay the processes of government."

THE great merit of both *The Fettered Presidency* and *The Imperial Congress* is to focus from as many angles as possible upon the subtle issue that is too casually elided under the mechanical concept of the separation of powers. Both volumes are collections of articles by scholars, government officials, journalists, and various other experts, largely but not exclusively moderate-to-Reaganite Republican. Where they differ is in tone and tactics. *The Imperial Congress*, the product of the issue-oriented Heritage/Claremont think tanks, is tougher and more heated, and ends with a ten-page action program that is, essentially, a blueprint for constitutional combat. *The Fettered Presidency*, offered by the American Enterprise Institute, is slightly more removed, less tendentious, but also much less unified in its presentation of prospective solutions. It displays a clear cleavage between those who feel congressional encroachment should be fought largely in the courts and those who argue that only through determined political effort—appealing over the heads of Congress to the American people—will Presidents win back their lost authority.

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First among the political advocates in *The Fettered Presidency* is former Judge Robert H. Bork, himself a victim of Congress's newfound assertiveness. In his foreword, Bork argues that "The President must make a public issue of congressional attempts to control his legitimate powers, perhaps by refusing to accept some restrictions even at the risk of political damage." The extent to which the Reagan administration, however defiant its rhetorical stands, failed to do that is a particularly intriguing question pursued in *The Fettered Presidency.*

Faced with Congress's increasingly grotesque omnibus spending practices—in 1987, for example, Congress passed a $600-billion, 2,100-page resolution, filled with hand-grenades designed to explode in all areas of policy, after *one hour* of debate—Reagan complained loudly. Then he signed. Again, despite his longstanding campaign for a line-item veto to rein in such congressional rampages, Reagan never challenged the constitutionality of the Budget and Impoundment Control Act, which purported to remove an impounding power exercised by Thomas Jefferson, among others. Nor, for that matter, has any President challenged the Act since its passage in 1974.

NOWHERE does the accumulation of executive passivity seem more striking than in the case of the War Powers Act, which all Presidents since Nixon have deemed unconstitutional. In *The Fettered Presidency,* former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger points out the idiocy of the law when applied to a real situation, such as the patrolling of the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war. In the crunch, it proved an exercise in dithering, donothingness, and empty posturing—precisely as the Founders might have predicted when they decided to separate the executive power from the legislature in the first place.

Weinberger concludes that "The constitutional status of the War Powers Act must be determined, or Congress must become sufficiently aware of the problems that it will not unconstitutionally and dangerously fetter the presidency." Yet Weinberger himself had plenty of time, one would think, to push that issue toward resolution. Why did the administration in which he served fail to do so? Weinberger says now that "we have problems in establishing the kind of case that can make such a determination under our legal system." One might imagine, however, that the U.S. legal system, so versatile at challenging everything else under the sun, might have risen to the occasion.

In fact, Weinberger is at least mildly contradicted here by Jeane Kirkpatrick, former U.S. ambassador to the UN, who feels that there was reason enough to press forward in any case. Eugene V. Rostow is particularly telling in his criticism of the Reagan and other administrations for their failure to defend constitutional prerogatives in foreign policy before the Supreme Court. The President, as Rostow puts it, "cannot exercise his responsibility if he does not defend his powers."

THE true complexity of the separation-of-powers issue is suggested by the fact that in the process of executive encroachment, Congress, too, has been engaged in a giveaway of its powers. The beneficiaries have been the lesser potentates of the fragmented congressional power system: subcommittee chairmen, staffers, and, ultimately, special interests. One of the most intriguing contributions to *The Fettered Presidency* is that of Barbara Hickson Craig of Wesleyan University on the issue of legislative vetoes. Her conclusion: "The legislative veto is not really about 'democratic control' and accountability, as its promoters have claimed. . . . The motivation that prompted Congress to append vetoes to so many of its delegations was mistrust of its own law as much as anything else."

What can be done? *The Fettered*

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Presidency is devoted more to problems than to answers. Some contributors stress the need for renewed comity: Elliott Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, expresses the hope at one point that executive and legislative branches might end up in the hands of the same party, even if those hands should be Democratic. Michael Horowitz, formerly chief legal officer at the Office of Management and Budget, argues that House Republicans should consider throwing their support to moderate and conservative Democrats as committee chairmen, in an effort to regain some measure of control in the congressional process.

The Imperial Congress offers a more impetuous prescription: scratch, bite, kick, claw to regain ground in the power game, more or less at every opportunity. "The presidency must be more active, involved, combative, aggressive, accusatory, rambunctious, disruptive, and demanding at every step of the legislative process," writes "Gabriel Prosser," the pseudonym "of a long-time legislative- and executive-branch official." In its recommendations section, this peppery volume charges forward on all fronts. The President should seek repeal of the War Powers Act. He should "publicize the efforts of members of Congress to influence executive-branch decisions." He should "ignore, or challenge directly, some detail of micromanagement of an executive department."

Some of the Heritage/Claremont suggestions have great merit: after all the years of shadow-boxing, securing a definitive judgment on the War Powers Act would seem to be of cardinal importance. But the weakness of the plan is in the sum of its parts: it demands a degree of activism that would leave the executive branch so exhausted as to be deprived once again of that quality—energy—essential to the proper performance of its role. And even then the strategy might not succeed; one can easily imagine it turning into a death by a thousand legislative cuts. More likely still, an overambitious program of confronting Congress would take the form of rhetorical assertiveness followed by retreat on many fronts—more or less the position of the Reagan administration.

What both of these books make clear, however, is that the task of protecting the always weaker executive power in America requires a strategic sense and a determination to fight the right battles at the right time, without flinching. In other words, to preserve his place in the Constitution, the President must behave as if he were the Commander-in-Chief.

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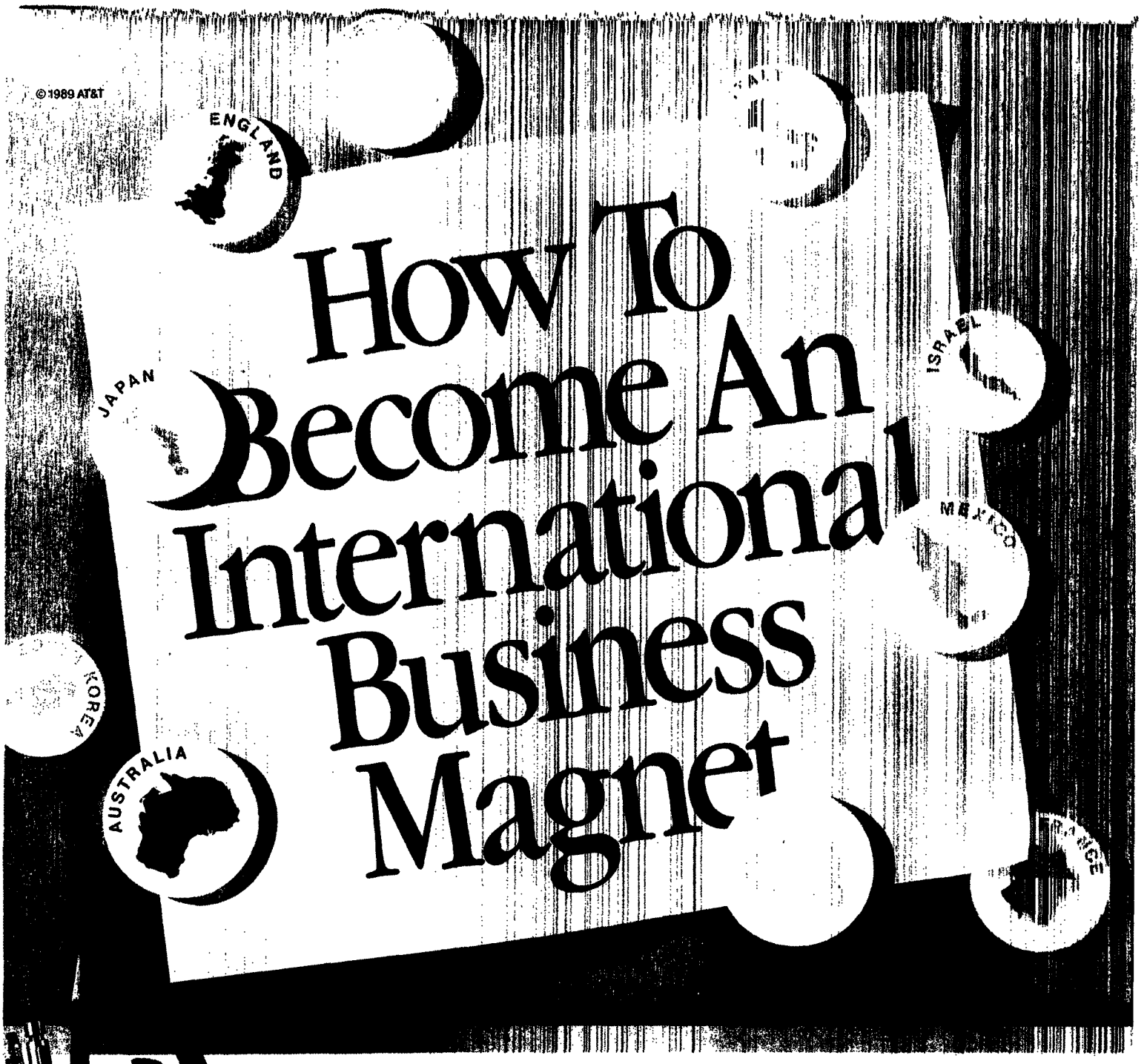

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